A Short History of American Presbyterianism

From Its Foundations to the Reunion of 1869

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American Presbyterianism

From the Founding of the Presbyterian Church to the War of the Revolution

PRESBYTERIANS, unlike others of all the chief denominations in our favored nation, came to the heritage which they have by this time, with little or no incorporation at the first. Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Reformed Dutch, Swedes, Baptists, Methodists, Lutheran and Reformed Germans,—all came at the beginning in bands of some previous organization or compact in the Old World for the purpose of settlement here in the way of colonization or mission at least, in order to prepare the way for transplanting the old or new sodalities of other lands.[1] The most remarkable fact which distin-

[1] *History of the Presbyterian Church*, by Dr. Charles Hodge, Part I, p. 21.

guishes our beginning is that every attempt of this kind was foiled by some baleful disaster. The earliest failure on record, probably, was that of the Eagle's Wing, a ship freighted for America in 1637 with ministers and people from Scotland and Ireland, to follow the example of the Puritans who had so recently embarked from England and successfully reached these shores. Everything seemed to be well appointed for conveying to a friendly haven here a compacted Presbyterian body, in full shape, as a model of elderships already made, and sure to begin a commonwealth of session, presbytery and synod. But the sea wrought and was tempestuous, and storms of heaven compelled them to return.[1] John Bramhall, archbishop of Armagh, who represented prelacy in Ireland, lashed the disappointed voyagers with ridicule in Latin verse. But Samuel Rutherford, of Scotland, with prophetic sympathy, saw deeper into the mystery of that result, and wrote, in one of those letters which have a saintly fragrance for all generations, "I would not have you think it strange that your journey to New England has got such a dash. It hath, indeed, made my heart heavy, but I know that it is no dumb Providence, but a speaking one, whereby the Lord speaks his mind to you, though for the present ye do not well understand what he saith."

[1] Reed's *History of the Presbyterian Church, Ireland.*

The God of our fathers continued, however, to speak in this way. A plan for colonizing America with their own disciples was approved by some seventy members of the Westminster Assembly before their session ended, but the civil war hindered its execution.[1] Immediately after the battle of Dunbar, Oliver Cromwell sent shiploads of Scotchmen to be sold in these plantations for the expenses of their passage. And after the Restoration, Charles II sent his prisoners from the risings of Pentland and Bothwell to be sold in like manner from Boston to Charleston, at any price that might pay for transporting them to exile. But all this, of course, was cruel dispersion, and not the pilgrimage of churches. Schemes in Scotland to fill emigrant ships with Covenanters taken from the mountain gorges and the filthy prisons, where only they could escape the dragoons of Claverhouse, though favored by wealthy patrons and prompted by the persecuting government itself, were always dashed by some adversity—perhaps a spiteful arrest of the embarkation at the very point of departure, crazy ships which could not make the passage, desolating fevers on shipboard, or a pestilential home awaiting them at the place of their destination, as it was at Port Royal in South Carolina. Something always turned up to baffle and disperse a transported Pres-

[1] Webster's *History of the Presbyterian Church in America.*

byterianism. The last enterprise of this kind was the saddest of all. A noble confessor, of whom the world was not worthy, son of a wealthy patriot who had done much service to the State—George Scot of Pitlochie—for the crime of harboring John Welsh in his house and following him in "the preaching of the fields," had been ruined in his patrimony by insatiate fines and broken in health by cruel imprisonment, and at length permitted to leave his country with his life, provided he would take with him, at his own expense, a cargo of similar offenders to a settlement somewhere in East Jersey. With wise and persevering aim he determined to gather a Presbyterian church for his company—Archibald Riddel for the minister, John Fraser, a candidate for the ministry, elders and deacons and people of the best condition, Bibles and psalm books and Confessions of Faith. More than double the number of pilgrims that had filled the Mayflower at Plymouth, as near the beginning of the century as this was the end, crowded the ship of Pitlochie, and superior, perhaps, to any shipload of men and women that ever weighed anchor in passing over to America, estimating their social position at home along with their intelligence and piety and devotion to the liberty of Christ. But the depth of ocean claimed that sainted colony for its own. The master of the ship was brutally inhuman.

Their provisions were spoiled, a deadly fever seized the passengers and dropped them in the sea, the great majority, including that heroic George himself and his wife, and all of his except one married daughter.[1]

These memorials of peculiar adversity are now, indeed, as Rutherford would say, "a speaking Providence" to us, and we may understand the meaning. It was that Presbyterianism, "whose seed is in itself after his kind," should be indigenous upon American soil, and show here as nowhere else its innate and incomparable force of organization; that no ready-made consolidation should be imported here, with transplanted shape or exotic tradition, to find its genesis in accidents of European history for all coming time. The seeds of Westminster, wafted hither, as their field is the world, must come like the thistledown, detached from one another and floating individually, as if borne to be dispersed, and growing ripe only to be scattered abroad by every wind that blows. Like Abraham, the man of this faith must receive in solitary exile the promise that a nation shall be born of him and all this wilderness shall be the possession of his principles. It was appointed of God that the polity of Presbyterians, like each man's own pocket Bible, should be an individual conviction before it became a conventional arrangement, gathered with private

[1] Wodrow and Webster.

judgment from inspired pages, and written on the table of the heart before it had occasion to bind itself about the neck and adorn the hands of a great denomination.

So it had sprung forth at the first Reformation, when Protestantism, to the four-fifths of its whole extension, emerged, a Presbyterian organism in all the leading features of its visibility. So it had sprung forth at the second Reformation, in Puritan mightiness, with the overthrow of Tudor and Stuart prelacy in England, when the fallow grounds of civil and religious liberty were plowed so deeply at the springtide of the English commonwealth. Never before did truth so spring out of the earth and righteousness look down from heaven at the work of symbolism, without apology to be made any more, in a creed, and without a bias in the body, religious or political, as when the hundred and twenty-one divines, along with thirty statesmen illustrious for ability and learning, were summoned to construct our standards in the chapel of Henry the Seventh. And now the virgin soil of a new world was to have a like spontaneous growth of the same model, and that beyond the reach of any of that reactionary influence which has always been lurking in the dormitories of spiritual despotism, through the Old World.

Hence that obscurity which hides from us the

precise date and particular place at which the first Presbyterian organization was made in our country. It is always hard to tell the first blade of corn that appears in a field over which the seed has been scattered in season or out of season. Long Island has claimed it for Jamaica. But more than twenty years before, McNish, the first Presbyterian minister there, moved for an eldership and a presbytery. Riddel, the minister whom Pitlochie selected, was laboring in 1685 at Woodbridge. New Jersey has therefore claimed it; but the ministry of Riddel was transient as a missionary tour; he returned in a little time to Scotland. So Maryland has claimed it, and historians generally concede this claim; because, in answer to an application from Colonel Stevens in 1680 to the Presbytery of Laggan, Ireland, Francis Makemie came to Maryland in the year 1682 and began to organize churches at once. And yet in 1684 he wrote to Increase Mather from Elizabeth River, in Virginia, that his lot had been providentially cast among "a poor and desolate people" there, who had lost their "dissenting minister" by death in August of 1683. It is evident, therefore, that soon after he came to this country he was laboring on the east branch of Elizabeth River, Norfolk County, Va., as the successor of a dissenting, and probably Presbyterian, minister, whose settlement there had been indefinitely earlier.

But beyond all question, Francis Makemie, the Irishman, born in Donegal and educated among the Scottish universities, began the organizing of our Church throughout this land, with abounding missionary toil to gather it and amazing skill of administration to settle it. Of course he brought his convictions of truth and order with him to work with and not to speculate about as an alterable Presbyterianism, which might be made something other than it had been in order to suit American people. His errand was to plant what he already knew and believed in. And whilst he wrote for help in all directions, to Boston and to London, where Congregational and Presbyterian unions existed, it was to Ireland he would go back, through all perils of the sea, to bring over men like himself in culture and conviction, to carry on his work and extend it, as he did in 1705, when he brought with him John Hampton and George McNish.

The first presbytery met in 1706 at Freehold, N. J., soon after his return with such recruits, and he was the moderator. It consisted of eight ministers, including the one ordained at that meeting, with as many ruling elders as might be present, and who were present on the rolls of that initial period (which are extant) in as large proportion as they have ever attended since. The members were all Scotch-Irish, excepting one, the pastor of Philadel-

phia, Jedediah Andrews, who was from Massachusetts; Francis Makemie, John Hampton, George McNish, Samuel Davis, John Wilson, Nathaniel Taylor and John Boyd were the other ministers; and the record shows that everything proceeded with the same order and the same transaction and the same parlance of the minute as if the Presbytery of Laggan itself had been transported bodily to Freehold, as they had resolved that it should be if Usher had not mitigated at that very time the yoke of prelacy under which they were groaning in Ireland.[1] To say, therefore, that American Presbyterianism is "its own type," different from the system everywhere else, must be either untrue in the light of our authentic annals or a mere truism in historical averment, as much as to say that French and Genevan and Holland and English and Scotch and Irish Presbyterianism is each its own type. There is but one type of what is divinely true, since the Archetype ascended to "give" a pattern from "the mount." And if there be anything peculiar in calling this American, it must be the perfect freedom with which it works off here everything that shaped or constrained it elsewhere by "the commandments of men."

Francis Makemie himself was a type of the

[1] See *Records*, edited by Dr. Wm. M. Engles, Board of Publication.

American minister, more complete, probably, than any other man ever born and educated on our own soil through all our generations. Intensely individual and yet many-sided, firm yet versatile, thoughtful and practical, devoted to one thing and occupied with many things, he was indeed the father of that "peculiar" body, the presbyterate of this denomination, and the only "priesthood" we have except our people. Beginning with a good education, soundness in the faith and soberness of mind, to try the religion of his fathers in the experiment of life, making all circumstances yield to its importance, taming the wilderness with its culture, and founding customs, laws and constitutions of social and civil advancement according to its paramount and original norm, he came as a missionary and lived like an apostle; aggressive, obeying God rather than man; loyal to Cæsar, but never abashed before his tribunals; working with his own hands, though at the business of a merchant, and giving to the Church of his own substance more than he received from her all the days of his life.

Having preached some time at Barbadoes on his way to this country, it was at "the Barbadoes store" in this city that he preached the first Presbyterian sermon at Philadelphia in the year 1692, some six years before the settlement of the first pastor, Mr. Andrews.

The care of all the churches was upon him; and no itinerant ever journeyed so much on the coast of our country in seeking "a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people," and yet no man was ever so much intent on establishing permanent and pastoral relations and precise presbyterial connections. He wrote well, with a vigorous pen, and began well in using the press for instruction to the young and the ignorant. His first production was a catechism, and his second a defense of that catechism against George Keith, a man of vast notoriety as an apostate Quaker and renegade Episcopalian. This made Makemie famous at Boston as an author, and won for him the admiration of Increase and Cotton Mather. He was a Christian gentleman, withal, of the most cultivated manners, and an orator of graceful power and fascinating address. He always captivated the rulers of Maryland and Virginia in his applications to them for the liberty of preaching, and he never failed to win his way with these accomplishments until he came to New York and dined with Edward Hyde, the Viscount Cornbury, a full cousin of Queen Anne, and grandson of Clarendon, the historian of calumny.

Cornbury had come as governor of the colony in 1702. Nine years before this unfortunate event a statute had passed through the assembly and council by "an artifice," according to the boast of its

author subsequently made, the whole assembly being dissenters except the speaker himself. By this act the territory was to be divided into parishes for "one good and sufficient minister" in each, to be supported by taxes levied on all the people. Most of the people being Dutch, and honestly believing that one "good and sufficient minister" might be Reformed or independent just as well as Episcopalian, and the people in every parish being authorized to assess their own taxes and choose their own pastors, no ruler, governor or judge dared to unveil the trick, and it remained a dead letter until Cornbury came with "instructions," as he alleged, from the court or council of the queen. These instructions were, in substance, that the "Act of Toleration," William and Mary, 1689, should not be extended to the province of New York without the express permission of the governor. High-church partisans, we know, carried everything in the court of Queen Anne. "The Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts" was instituted in 1701 under such auspices, with ample funds and powerful patrons, political as well as religious. George Keith, Colonel Morris and Lord Cornbury were now factors on this side of the Atlantic to nullify the Act of Toleration, establish the hierarchy of England in America, and restore the intolerance which had been overthrown by the

revolution at home. Simultaneous with Cornbury's arrival was the effort of Morris to persuade the colonial assembly of New Jersey to give up their government to the Crown and enact the same "artifice" for the Church as in New York—a measure defeated by only two votes, one of a Quaker and the other of a Baptist, and yet virtually accomplished for thirty-six years by the proprietaries themselves when they surrendered to the Crown their possessions in New Jersey as a burden more than a profit. Even William Penn was startled at this turn of spiritual despotism when he found Lord Cornbury looking after Philadelphia, and the vestrymen of the city actually intriguing for an extension of the viscount's authority over them. A storm from the pen of that mild philanthropist effectually stopped the business in Pennsylvania, when he wrote to the lords of trade and plantations demanding that they should either buy him out or let him buy out "the hot Church party," as he called it.

At this time it was that Makemie and Hampton came along on their way to Boston in quest of more ministers. Their fame had preceded them at New York. The governor himself sought their acquaintance. But with all his politeness and pretension, they would not ask him for leave to preach, and he was enraged. The Dutch and French churches both refused the pulpit to Ma-

kemie through fear of the tyrant, who had openly declared that the "one good and sufficient minister," in the act of 1693, must be construed as one episcopally ordained according to the Church of England, so that no other English preaching at least should be had in New York without his consent; and even Dutch and French preaching was made to feel that it was free by sufferance and shielded by its foreign tongues, rather than by prescription or treaty or law. But still the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian would preach in New York, and that without the governor's leave; and accordingly, in a private house on Pearl Street, that of William Jackson, a shoemaker, the first Presbyterian sermon was preached to as many as would hear him, with doors and windows open, on the text Psalm 50: 23: "To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God." An infant child also was baptized in that service. The same day Hampton preached at Newtown, Long Island.

Early in the week they were both arrested and brought before the angry and bigoted official. With the utmost dignity and manliness Makemie demanded to know by what law the arrest was made. Cornbury said his "instructions" were the law, and they would not suffer him to allow "strolling preachers to spread their pernicious doctrines." Makemie replied that his Confession of

Faith was known to the world, that his doctrines were sound, the same as the articles of the Church that denied him the right to preach them, and challenged examination, saying that they had been already approved by the authorities of Virginia and Maryland, and at Barbadoes also, where he had been qualified according to the act of toleration. At this the persecutor exclaimed that no law of the kind belonged to the colonies, and no permission, at any rate from another province, would avail under his government, and he would know nothing but his own instructions from Her Majesty's council. Makemie denied that his instructions were law, and again demanded a sight of the statute under which he was arrested. "You, sir, know law!" said Cornbury, with a sneer, and ordered him to prison.

Everything technical in the form of commitment was violated. Repeated experiments to correct the blundering were made, and each blunder of the writ had to be paid for by the prisoners, whilst they were kept all the while in jail. It seemed impossible to obtain either liberty or trial. After two months' imprisonment he was released on bail, and immediately went back to attend a meeting of presbytery in Philadelphia, thence resuming his missionary work, without forgetting his recognizance at New York.

At length a true bill was found against Makemie, Hampton being released. When the trial came on, the accused was defended by counsel and by himself. Tradition lauds the eloquence and power of his argument. The prosecution was overwhelmed with defeat and shame before judge and jury, and he was unanimously acquitted. Yet the cost to him of that persecuting false imprisonment and the trial was enormous, designed to make him still a prisoner for the debt. And he narrowly escaped a second arrest and the jail because he refused to promise that he would not preach again in New York, and actually did preach in the French church.

Within a year after this outrage on the Presbyterians, Lord Cornbury was superseded in office—not for his bigoted intolerance, however, but for his profligacy and corruption, a dishonored bankrupt and a disgrace alike to Church and State. Yet even in his downfall he raved against Makemie, and attempted to justify the atrocious wrong of that persecution before the lords of trade and plantations with the following description of our venerated founder, which, in softer phrase, might be considered apostolic fitness for his work in America: "He is jack-of-all-trades: he is a preacher, a doctor of physic, a merchant, an attorney, a counselor-at-law, and, which is worst of all, a disturber of governments." The same year, 1708, Makemie died.

The agitation of this affair and other iniquitous proceedings, like the wrong done to Jamaica in robbing her by fraud and violence of both church and glebe—the most valuable church property on Long Island—and compelling her people to wait through almost thirty years of expensive litigation to recover it from the Episcopalians, at length disgusted governors and judges even belonging to that sect.[1] A feud also had been occasioned between clergy and laity by the greed and ambition of Vesey, the first rector of Trinity Church. He had been born and bred a Puritan, and had been sent by Increase Mather to look after the Congregationalists about New York. But Governor Fletcher, another of the most corrupt men of his age, offered him the rectorship and sent him to England for "orders," although he was ultimately installed by two ministers of the Reformed Dutch Church. He was entirely bought over, and at once became even more than "conformed." His eye was taken with a small farm called the "King's Bowerie," and he determined to grasp the fee simple for Trinity. The Episcopalian people desired only a lease, being opposed to mortmain not only, but to the schemes of Vesey in general, having little confidence in his integrity or sanctity. But he triumphed over the best and ablest laymen of his church, and secured in

[1] Dr. Macdonald's *History Jamaica Church.*

temporalty for the support and propagation of prelacy the largest inheritance of any particular church in America.

In the confusion of this quarrel the handful of pious men who had continued their distinct meetings for prayer on the Lord's Day, after the visit of Makemie, were encouraged to attempt the formation of a Presbyterian church in the city of New York. Some of the most prominent citizens belonged to this band, and were soon associated with numbers increasing from year to year. They determined to have a pastor in 1716, and called James Anderson from Delaware, a Scotchman ordained nine years before by the presbytery of Irvine for American missions—"a graceful orator, a popular preacher and a worthy man." In three years a church was built, and even the legislature of Connecticut ordered a collection throughout that colony to aid the enterprise. In 1720 the congregation petitioned the governor and council for a charter of incorporation. But the opposition of Trinity Church, actually appearing by counsel, defeated them, and the title to their property had to be vested in Anderson himself and three members of the church and by them transferred to ministers of Edinburgh in 1730. For more than half a century the First Presbyterian Church of New York city could not obtain the right of a citizen to sue and be

sued in the courts of the country, owing to the hostile power and overshadowing wealth of Trinity Church. And this injustice greatly damaged there the feeble inception of our cause. It compelled the pastor to meddle too much with the temporal concerns of the church and brought dissension into the bosom of his flock. A division ensued and a second congregation was made, and Jonathan Edwards, at the age of nineteen, was called to the new organization. But Anderson resigned his charge, and Edwards left with much regret for want of competent support. Both congregations were soon happily reunited in the ministry of Ebenezer Pemberton, son of a Boston pastor, and a graduate of Harvard, who prospered for thirty years in that conspicuous charge, and left it a flock of nearly fourteen hundred souls.

Thus the peculiar and extreme dispersion to which Presbyterians were doomed at the early colonization of this country was followed with legal and illegal intolerance precisely at the period of the first formation. No wonder it was so in the cradle of that day, when the old convening propensity toward presbyteries and synods, which had troubled the prelacy of England so much for a century and a half, began to show itself on this continent, like a handwriting on the wall, to signify that spiritual despotism was finished, that the union of Church and State would be impossible, that be-

tween the bondage of hierarchical tyranny on one side and the anarchy of advisory councils on the other a strong republic not of this world would arise, well compacted, like a stone cut out without hands, to become a great mountain, filling the land and remaining "an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations."

It was in "the Augustan age of England" that our infant Church was hindered and oppressed from New York to Charleston, with disabilities thrown upon her even in Maryland, where Episcopalians revoked what Roman Catholics had given of religious liberty.

East of New York, and over almost the whole extent of Puritan independency, there was a civil establishment which made parishes identical with townships, and taxed the inhabitants by statute for the support of the Church as well as the road, the prison and the poorhouse. When Presbyterian emigrants came, therefore, to attempt the distinct organization of their churches in New England, it was found that a constraint and burden beset them but little different from the oppression of the old countries, where dissent was liable to the tithing of installed religion as well as the voluntary offering of stipend for its own ministry and ordinances. They were not only too poor but too conscientious to support with their substance a discipline of the

Church that was radically different from their own representative system. And there was jealousy, harsh and bitter at times, on the part of ministers and people among those theocratic townships. When a few Presbyterians attempted to settle at Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1718, with their pastor Fitzgerald, they were violently hindered by a mob from building a house of worship, and that mob, it is said, was headed by some "considerable persons" of the town; and this intolerance continued for twenty years in the way of taxing Presbyterians for the support of the first Congregational Church of that town, until most of them removed to the western frontier of New York.

A whole presbytery, called by tradition the Irish Presbytery, and calling themselves the Presbytery of Boston, consisting of ten ministers at least besides Lemercier of the French church in that city, became so quietly and completely pressed down and out by the policy of New England in the first part of the last century that history can hardly find the date either of its origin or its extinction.[1] Exceptional places like Londonderry and Rutland, where some division of the township by courts of law or acts of the colonial assembly afforded relief, were very few during the whole period of Presbyterian settlement.

[1] Colman's MSS., Massachusetts Historical Society's collection.

Indeed, there was but one strip of country in all our broad land where presbytery could stretch itself without molestation from the jealousy of spiritual powers, and that was the border of a savage wilderness. It happened, in the goodness of God, that most of this border was the Jezreel of America, rich and beautiful through its whole extent of Cumberland Valley in Pennsylvania and Shenandoah in Virginia, and yet the bloodiest battle-ground we have ever had since the beginning of our American civilization. There the Scotch-Irish Presyterians were suffered to pour the streams of immigration and set up their tabernacle without a challenge, because there they had to stand guardsmen for the nation through nearly the whole of a century. The cabins there might worship as they pleased. A cordon of blood and fire might build its own altars and have the war-whoop of the Indians for a diapason through its own cathedrals. The apathetic peace of Quaker authorities in Pennsylvania and the chevalier pride of Episcopal authorities in Virginia united in giving countenance to Presbyterians all along the North Mountain, while the trail of the savage and smoke of his wigwam, the deadly rifle and ruthless tomahawk, made it undesirable to have the "one good and sufficient minister" in every parish ordained episcopally and supported by "a tax on all the inhabitants" of poor and perilous frontier stockades.

But there presbytery flourished. There a pure gospel was preached by such men as Craighead and Thompson and Steel and Elder with a pocket Bible in one hand and a loaded rifle in the other. There and then, as always in critical or eventful times, heroes grew on the bench of ruling elders. There Chambers, at the peril of his life and fortune, gathered a whole community into his own fort, and when other populations fled the valley, stood with indomitable courage at the outposts of civilization in his town, and almost alone rolled back the rush of savage inhumanity.[1] And there it was that Armstrong, a ruling elder in Carlisle, drew to him Hugh Mercer, a young physician from Scotland, and projected that intrepid action at Kittanning which delivered the valley from savage incursion, and stands in history, as it did in the opinion of Washington, the most valorous and timely discomfiture of the foe ever achieved in warfare with the Indians. Armstrong lived to become the intimate friend of Washington, by whose influence he was made a general of the Revolution and a member of the old Congress. And his son it was who carried Mercer in his arms from the battle-ground of Princeton, became a senator in Congress, ambassador to France and secretary of war in the administration of Madison.

[1] *Irish and Scotch Early Settlers, etc.*, by George Chambers.

It will now be admitted that, in view of all the disadvantages of our beginning and opposition to our first progress, there must be rare dynamic virtue in the creed which could gather people so dispersed, and organize quickly and well a body like the Presbyterian Church, that has always grown consolidated in proportion as it has grown vast. In 1707 it had eight ministers and twelve churches. In 1717 it had more than doubled this number both of ministers and churches; and the perfect harmony with which it went into a synod that year and agreed upon the subordination of three presbyteries into which it was resolved, and drew to this plural a fourth in Long Island which had been Independent more than Presbyterian ten years before, shows a primal force in some great principles underlying our whole conception of the Church. No one can doubt, with our primitive records before him, that the first ecclesiastical movement which we relate this day was due to intelligent ideas that had been maturing for centuries, and began to work on this hemisphere anew, and yet normal as if they had begun again at the suburbs of Geneva or colleges of Edinburgh; and just as little can we doubt that the assimilation of new material from Holland, France, Germany, Wales and Sweden, as well as New England, was more and more complete as our system extended its fold. It was better Presbyterianism in

1717 than in 1707; better still in 1729, when "The Adopting Act" was voted and the numbers had grown to nearly double of what they were at the formation of the synod; better in 1741, when the rupture of ministerial communion made each wing of the separation vie with the other in devotion to the adopted standards of the whole; and better yet when the schism was healed in 1758 with a reunion which made it impossible that the Church could ever split again for the same causes of division.

This great Catholic tendency, which is the main characteristic of the Presbyterian system when it is fairly understood, arises from a few elementary principles that were all at work in the first planting, and for almost half a century before an express formulation by the act of 1729, which approved of Presbyterian Church government as well as adopted the Confession of Faith and the catechism. Indeed, these principles originated the Reformation in Scotland itself, and were covenanted in the body of her discipline again and again before the Westminster Assembly could gather and build with them a directory in their Confession of Faith. These are chiefly the following:—

1. The Church, in its visible form, is a company of parents and children which answers to the divine purpose in Christ before the world began, to prepare a "fullness" for him through all remaining

time that will represent him on earth while he represents it in heaven.

2. This representative body is made such by the constant communication of gifts and graces from himself through the agency of the Holy Spirit.

3. These gifts and graces are diversified to an indefinite extent, no two members on earth being perfectly alike in this endowment.

4. Consequently, the larger this body is made, which the Holy Ghost inhabits, the more complete the diversity reflected, and therefore the more fully is this image of Christ delineated among men.

5. Officers commensurate with the need of this body through every age are all given of God with warrant in his word, the ascension gifts of a glorious Master, and all of them representatives emphatically and in a triple sense, representing him to the Church and the Church to him, and both him and the Church to the whole world.

6. These officers, besides the function of each individual according to his order, hold jurisdiction by assemblies, only in the name of Christ, for the exercise of any power bestowed upon the Church.

7. Assemblies, through all their varieties and gradations, are to be compacted together, always converging in some higher unity which is one of ultimate appeal and general authority.

8. This ultimate and highest tribunal, by whatever name it may be called, is the primary court, being next and nearest the Head in the scope of its aims and representation of all the churches, so that if there be power in the Church anywhere lodged which has not been specifically distributed by a formal constitution, this high court is the depository of such power, to meet the exigences that cannot be foreseen or provided for by any written constitution.

9. Election of officers must be in the people of each particular church, who are free to choose among the candidates approved of God and imbued with his Spirit, suffrage always abiding where the Holy Ghost abides, the great commission of the ministry really resting on the bosom of the whole Church, and no one succession of individual men, who are all given to the Church only to serve her, the transmission of office by those already invested being always a relative and not absolute necessity, qualified by the greater necessity of ability and faithfulness.

These are the principles which had shaped the Presbyterian Church in every land and among English-speaking people just as long before "The Adopting Act" of America as our Centennial of civil independence has been coming since that adoption. In Scotland a General Assembly existed before either

synods or presbyteries were formed, as a council of apostles, elders and brethren was held in Jerusalem before any intermediate judicature had been formed, for the reference of causes from particular churches. Our presbytery at Freehold or Philadelphia at the opening of the eighteenth century was the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America. It was a "representation of all the particular churches in this denomination;" it was "the bond of union, peace and mutual confidence" at home and the organ of "correspondence" with churches abroad. It "issued all references and appeals" and exercised all the authority of review over courts of record below it; and beyond this, it often did the session's work in particular churches, and exercised the right of "eminent domain" in bringing its authority to bear on evils and disorders which it was wise to redress before any record could be made below or any complaint and appeal could have time to go up above. In ten years more that General Assembly was called a synod, and this body exercised in turn all the prerogatives now invested in our supreme judicatory by the constitution; and more than this, it often did the work of presbyteries, erecting or dividing particular churches, ordaining, translating and judging ministers, adopting standards—the Westminster Confession of Faith and Directory in 1729, just as the General

Assembly of Scotland had done in 1645—without sending down overtures to the presbyteries on the subject. This privilege was a grant, subsequently made, in the way of distribution, vesting rights below which are, of course, irrevocable, from the reservoir of power inherent in that supreme assembly which most fully represents Christ himself and all the particular churches of this denomination, as it was at the close of the seventeenth century in the "Barrier Act" by the General Assembly of Scotland.

We may now see that two republican structures grew up together on this continent during the eighteenth century, the converse of each other, but all the more concordant and helpful to each other on this account—Church republicanism and State republicanism. Very much alike in being both the ordinance of God, and both constructed largely by Presbyterian hands, and both containing the democratic element in large proportion, yet they differ essentially in the order and place they gave to real democracy. The Church begins in heaven; the State begins on earth. The Church begins with unity; the State with multiplicity. The Church is founded on one divine "Rock"; the State is founded on many minute constituencies of men. The Church secures her safety and the liberty of her people by the exercise of power in but one branch

of it, committed to men, the judicial, and that modified by the equities of paternal discretion; the State secures her safety and the liberty of her people by the coördinate exercise of power in three branches, legislative, judicial, and executive, with as little of the paternal as possible. The Church is complete only in the representation of all the gifts and graces emanating from her Head and flowing down to the skirts of priesthood in her people of every name and place and age, making it impossible for any true Presbyterian to be a bigot and out of coöperative union with a single feature of Jesus wherever it is seen; the State may be complete in but one fragment of an empire, an island as well as a continent, a revolted province or colony as well as a subjugated kingdom annexed; so that it is impossible for a true citizen to be cosmopolitan, as a true Christian is catholic, or to travel from one country to another, without being an alien. Insubordination is death to the State, rebellion being "as the sin of witchcraft"; but the resistance even of conscience to behests of the Church may weaken her energies and disturb her peace, but cannot touch her life, which is "hid with Christ in God." These two systems were never so thoroughly compared and sharply contrasted, and yet inseparably held, as they were by our fathers in the forming period of our Church, between 1706 and 1789.

Simultaneous with this movement of two structures was the movement of two currents within the province of ecclesiastical formation. One was from the North and the other from the South, and they met at Philadelphia. The Northern current issued from a theocracy in New England, which was then at the best of its experiment, having blended with a civil administration the government and discipline of the Church and rivaled the beautiful theocracy of Calvin at Geneva in the century before; and like that Helvetian model, it was transient as beautiful, leaving the Church it had cherished to weakness for schism and Socinianism, and the State it had sanctified to laughter, through all coming generations, at the "blue" regulations which governed forefather times. The current from the South was all Scotch-Irish, with a little Welsh in its element, made up of rivulets which owed alike their dispersion and confluence in the wilderness to bitter intolerance of Church and State united in the Old World, and was now swelling to a volume which would henceforth dash every scheme that would establish religion by law and divest the Church of government or discipline prescribed by her own Lord alone. There was some ridging and foaming when these currents met to form that river which has made glad the city of our God, although the Southern current, like the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic, prevailed with its

direction, and made the Independent Presbyterian Andrews, of Philadelphia, who had written to Dr. Colman, of Boston, about the overture of John Thompson for subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith, offered first in 1727 and pressed to the vote in 1729, that he "had been in hopes they would hear no more of it," and Dickinson, of Elizabeth, who had published, in strictures upon it, that such a subscription would be like the wall about Laish—nothing of protection, but a snare—were soon more than contented, both of them. And all the others of that stream—Pemberton, Pierson, Morgan, Elmer, Webb and Pumry, with the churches of East Jersey and Long Island—yielded and owned with glad reminiscence that it proved to be all the benefit its authors had promised. And no wonder they were so easily satisfied with Westminster at that time, when the Northern current bore on its bosom Cambridge and Saybrook platforms going to pieces—synods and ruling elders in rafts which could be floated on only by the stronger withs of Presbyterian organization.

Instead of checking the influx of Puritan ministers and people, the formal adoption of our standards increased the number, until, within one generation, from being as one to seven, it became almost one to three, in the proportion of ministers. Instead of depressing the energy and influence of New Eng-

land men to acquiesce reluctantly in the subscription which Irish and Scotch members, in their strong majority, had imposed, they became honored guides of the Presbyterian Church through the stormy and eventful midst of the last century. It might even be called the Dickinson age of our Church. Scotch and Irish ministers never dominated as a party in their successful structure of our system. The leading authors were from New England, with the exception of Gilbert Tennent, whose book and pamphlets issued from the press, it was said, "as bees from a hive." Not to speak of Edwards in this connection, Jonathan and Moses Dickinson and Joseph Morgan, of Freehold, were prolific authors; and the first of these three had no superior in handling the press of that day for the service of that generation and the generations following.

But scarcely had the fabric of this fair construction been completed with so much harmony of council and adornment of ability and learning, piety and zeal, when it was subject to a strain which has no parallel in history. Lest it should be exalted above measure by the consciousness of strength in its unity and orthodoxy and force of discipline, it was humbled and almost ruined by the agitations of that "great awakening" which was so world-wide in the days of Whitefield and Wesley, Davenport, Edwards, Dickinson and the Tennents. Perhaps

the temper of its organization was too rigid for such a time, and the attitude of fencing against the laxity which was coming in from abroad had induced a reserve and suspicion that were excessive in the body of our old synod. Probably also many of its best ministers and people were too indiscriminate in challenging a revival of religion which had so much of tumult and disorder in its manifestations, radicalism in its pretensions and fanatical bitterness in its judgments. Certainly, also, there was much declension of practical godliness, considering the recent high and perfectly harmonious attainment of the Presbyterian Church in purity of doctrine and simplicity of order and worship. But these were faults which only "the meekness and gentleness of Christ" in the unction of his ministers could deal with. The wrath of man, however, unhappily attempted to work the righteousness of God when Samuel Blair and Gilbert Tennent undertook to convert the Church instead of the world with their burning zeal and wonderful abilities.

They began with acrimonious invective. Irritated by the strictures of slow but sober-minded brethren on the enthusiasm of Whitefield and his coworkers, the most ardent of whom was Gilbert Tennent—their pretensions to know precisely who were converted among the people and who were unconverted among the ministers, and their en-

couragement of strange disorder in the meetings for worship, the hideous outcries, bodily agitations and convulsive fits of "the falling work," alike in the camp meeting and the Church—Tennent and Blair, at the open synod, charged their fellow-members in formal "presentation" papers, read before a crowd of promiscuous followers, with unregeneracy of heart, heresy of doctrine (for allowing our own happiness to be a motive at all in obedience to God), pharisaic hypocrisy and dead formality in their ministrations. In the same year Gilbert Tennent preached at Nottingham a sermon on "the dangers of an unconverted ministry," which was filled with the most malign denunciation of evangelical men that fanaticism could express in our language—a sermon published twice at Philadelphia and once at Boston, and scattered like the leaves of November among the churches. In this "Nottingham sermon" the people were advised to judge their ministers and assured that they were capable of discerning the unconverted among their shepherds, and that it was their duty to forsake the ministry of such and quit hearing any man whose preaching did not profit their souls according to their own judgment and taste. Along with this incendiary libel sown broadcast through the land were actual intrusions into the churches of such men as Alison and Boyd, Gillespie and Thomson,

not one church in the whole presbytery of Donegal escaping rupture; divisions made and gloried in, despite the solemn and repeated warning of synod. Added to all was open disobedience to the order of the synod that a liberal education should be required of candidates for the ministry—either a diploma from some approved college or an examination sustained by the synod—before any presbytery could be allowed to take the candidate on trials for license and ordination. The Presbytery of New Brunswick was no sooner created in 1738 than it began to protest against this order, and actually proceeded to license John Rowland, with total disregard of the injunction. The synod, having a right to judge of the proper qualification of its own members, refused to acknowledge license and ordination so irregularly made, and refused a seat to any one so introduced. The dispute occasioned by this anarchy involved other points of deviation, at which "the Brunswick party" began to swerve with radical jarring. The value of all external calling to the ministry was questioned, the enthusiasm of an inward call was held to be sufficient, and the power of a synod to govern a presbytery with anything stronger than mere advice was denied. Antinomian tendencies were developed on every hand, and the preaching of duty was denounced; learning and soundness and regularity of life were contemned as

inadequate vouchers for minister or member unless he could tell exactly when and how he was converted, and retain the assurance of this reality as distinctly in his knowledge as he could "a thought of his mind or a stab in his flesh."

It was well for the Church that the life of this party was the family of the Tennents. They had a school which was very good, but very poor—a log college—with their father at the head of it, the best of teachers in the last century, but extremely straitened in his means and immeasurably scant of the resources and appointments which belonged to the colleges of New England. Unfortunately, the requirement of a diploma or an examination by the synod itself, in order to be taken on trials for licensure, seemed to overlook too much the great service of that Neshaminy schooling, and mentioned only the chartered colleges of this and other lands. The senior William Tennent, master of the log college and father of four illustrious ministers—Gilbert, William, John and Charles—had come from Ireland ordained a priest of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and had renounced Episcopacy in coming here mainly because of objections to the use of liturgical forms in worship. He had little or no sympathy with the tumult of the time, except as he lived in his sons and pupils, and burned because they were offended with the imaginary slight of

Neshaminy by the synod. John, the third son, had finished his course at Freehold, N. J., before he was twenty-five years old, in 1732, and in a ministry of scarcely two full years had gathered a harvest for his Lord in that "poor distracted Scottish church" where he saw the firstfruits of the great revival which was so soon to overspread the continent. His brother William succeeded him in that charge with similar success, and a very peculiar fame for the supernatural in the course of his life. Charles was the youngest of these brothers, and settled in the Presbytery of New Castle, where his influence reinforced the New Brunswick party beyond the limits of that "protesting" presbytery.

But the strong man of this great family was Gilbert, the eldest son, fourteen years old when he came to this country, taught everything by his father, whom he also assisted in the log college, and the first Presbyterian minister whose whole education for the office had been received in America. When George Whitefield arrived at Philadelphia in 1739, he hastened to Neshaminy to imbibe the lessons of that school and the spirit of the prophets there. Gilbert Tennent was the man of all others whom he most admired as a preacher and as a guide in adapting his own resplendent ministry to the character of the churches and the conversion of the American people. To him he was indebted

also for most of the mistakes, antipathies and illusions which marred his career in this land. The fame of Whitefield, however, became that of the Tennents also in consequence of this intimacy and companionship, giving immense advantage with the people to any side of a contest on which Gilbert was engaged. The censoriousness, the intrusions, the distraction of parishes, pretensions to judge the hearts of men, the defiance of synodical authority,—all these and other fanatical excesses were so glorious for a while, in the company of Whitefield and the Tennents, that reflecting men who had rejoiced in the revival at first beheld with consternation the true glory of their infant Church departing. Discouraged, disorganized, left by the multitude and having no longer the "many" to sustain them in forms of judicial process, they determined to meet the extremity with a measure that corresponded with its lawlessness.

At the synod of 1741, Robert Cross, the successor of Andrews in Philadelphia, offered a "protest" against the "protestors" or Brunswick party, which enumerated with great precision and power the many evils which that party had brought upon the Church and which threatened her destruction, proposing to renounce all further connection with those brethren until they would confess and abjure the errors of their way. It was placed on the table

for signatures, and a scene of the utmost confusion followed. It is said the moderator left his chair, and the galleries, crowded with excited people, who generally sympathized with the new side, turned the confusion into uproar. Each side claimed to be the synod, and with much difficulty order was restored enough to count the signatures to this protest and the numbers opposed. It appeared that the former, called henceforth the Old Side, had the majority, and the latter, called the New Side, withdrew. Thus the schism of the last century began; and we must mark the finger of God for good even in this little thing—that the act of separation was a muss and not a vote. Half a generation might heal the one, a whole generation it would take to heal the other. As it was well ordered that the whole combination of the disturbing party hung upon the character and will of Gilbert Tennent, so it was well ordered that the protest which meant to revolutionize the Church with an overture rather than to conserve her with the process of her own discipline should be in no proper technical sense an act of the constituted synod.

Providentially, also, the whole Presbytery of New York was absent from that meeting of the synod. Next year, 1742, it appeared, and Jonathan Dickinson, one of its members, became the moderator. He at once proposed that the separated brethren of the

previous year should be restored to their seats—not because he thought they were blameless, for he condemned their excesses; not because they had become either penitent or apologetic, for they were going on to license others without regard to the authority of the synod, and to rend the churches in every direction and beyond all bounds with active intrusion and malign aspersion of the pastors; but because the whole transaction of 1741 had been irregular and unconstitutional. The excluded brethren ought to have been arraigned by their presbyteries or by the synod itself with process of discipline, and ejected only with a full and faultless record. But he failed. The majority objected with keen force that absentees of the preceding year should not assume the position of judges and seek to reverse what might have been better done if they had been present. Trial according to forms of process in the Directory was impossible when the offenders were leading the multitude and insisting to the last count that they were the synod themselves. And even a reconsideration of the act could not be moved when it had never been voted, and was now a rupture in fact without a record in order. There was no remedy but return of the excluded party to a better mind. Thus the schism was continued.

For three years the Dickinson proposal was

pressed on the synod, and conferences were held, with alternate overtures to the synod and to the excluded members. The latter had been brought by Aaron Burr and others to the point of confessing with regret nearly all the charges of irregularity and wrong, demanding in return that the protest of Cross should be withdrawn from the files and records of the synod. But this was refused for the simple reason that all its allegations were true, and truer every year. At length (1745) the Presbytery of New York formed itself into a synod and took upon its own roll the exscinded Presbytery of New Brunswick and all others in their following. This was done with little or no heat of resentment or antagonism in any particular, but the technical point of restoring to visible unity with the Presbyterian Church a body of men who were mad with enthusiasm, but sound in the faith and preëminently gifted for the service of Christ. It was expressly and thoroughly understood in this formation that the New York Synod, as it was now called, was one with the Synod of Philadelphia; not only in an honest adherence to the Westminster standards, but also in every particular of decency and order which had been specified in the dividing protest of 1741. Its attitude from the beginning was that of reunion; and if it had only repressed with a firm hand "the intrusions" with which the Brunswick party con-

tinued to agitate and divide the churches adhering to "the Old Side," there would not have been three instead of thirteen years more of separation. Here was the standing cause of discord, making every year an ultimate reconstruction of parishes and presbyteries in case of reunion more impracticable. The swelling tide of prosperity which favored the Synod of New York, and the halo of brilliant men and sainted evangelists which adorned her ministry at the time, hid from the world the sin of this obliquity, and left many a precious light in the territory of the old synod to be quenched by reason of distraction.

The glory of our old Synod of Philadelphia through all these times of excitement and convulsion was the "ornament" of her "meek and quiet spirit." When Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Blair insulted her to the face at the first with charges of unregeneracy, unfaithfulness and opposition to the Spirit of God, she adopted unanimously and sent forth to the churches, as well as enjoined on her ministers, the pastoral minute requiring them to take heed to themselves and search and see whether these things were so. When John Thompson, her great conservative and defender by the press, took up the task of her vindication in his imperishable book on church government, he did it with lowliness of spirit, modesty and candor and consistency.

throughout, which were in singular contrast with the haughty contempt of the "Nottingham" sermon and its volleys of subsequent defense.

So it was through all the ensuing conferences had between the synods until the reunion came about in 1758. Though her desolated and fragmentary churches could not be restored by any organic union, and though her great protest of 1741 must be affirmed at every conference as the truth of history and the moderation of justice to the character of both parties, she was willing to meet the chronic demand for its withdrawal by a phrase which yielded no principle, but kept the fact for all future generations in a state of negative solution. It was that the protest of 1741 "was not the act of the synod." On this phrase the two bodies agreed, and the main dispute was over.

Another cause of reunion was the complete humiliation of Gilbert Tennent. That "son of thunder" had discomfited himself, and the strong staff of the disturbing party was broken. He was the father of controversy in the American Presbyterian Church. Not by any false doctrine avowed nor by any scandal coming on his life nor by any paralysis of intellect and power of speech nor by loss of zeal for the cause of Christ in the salvation of souls, but by the extreme severity of his temper in religious controversy, he fell from leadership in this

Church. It awakened suspicion of error when he was seen to be tossed continually to the verge on this side and that of the vast area he trod in disputation. It arrayed against him the fears of all considerate men, whether timid or courageous; and the man who excites our fears never could govern Presbyterians. And, above all, it confounded himself with a maze of inconsistencies from which there could be no recovery. He had voted in the synod to approve of the admirable paper on the controversy between him and David Cowell respecting the foundation of moral obligation, and yet soon afterwards flung that paper back upon the synod as heretical, in permitting our own happiness in any sense to mingle with the glory of God in motives of obedience. He had assailed Count Zinzendorf and the Moravians with pamphlets as well as speeches of vehement censure, in which every objection was a condemnation of his "Nottingham sermon" and a justification of all that Robert Cross embodied in the memorable "protest of 1741." He had confessed in a letter of penitence to Jonathan Dickinson the great errors of his extravagance enumerated in that protest, and had this letter widely published among the churches at the very time a third edition of the Nottingham sermon was coming from the press in Boston under his own direction. Pamphleteers on both sides of the Atlantic were not slow

to blazon "Gilbert *vs.* Tennent;" and so great was the prejudice against him of good men abroad that the mission of Samuel Davies and himself to Great Britain for the College of New Jersey would have been a failure if he had not humbly retracted the Nottingham sermon in London, although the last conspicuous exploit of his pen just before leaving home was a fresh demand upon the synod of Philadelphia, as a term of reunion, that the protest of 1741, which had complained of that sermon, should be pronounced null and void and virtually untrue. Not in his lifetime and ascendency could there have been a reunion if he had not published his *Irenicum*, confessing his inconsistency and extravagance as he doffed the great coat and leathern girdle in which he had thundered from Delaware to Maine, and consented to retire as an ordinary pastor to the Second Church of Philadelphia.

Another cause of reconciliation which mightily constrained the greater to seek reunion with the less at that time was the virtual transference of the log college from Neshaminy to Princeton, whither, some two years before its consummation, Burr and seventy students had removed the College of New Jersey from Newark. The jealousy of all the Tennents had been buried in the grave of their father at the very time this college began with the presidency of Jonathan Dickinson at Elizabeth, and the pros-

perous academies of Pennsylvania and Maryland and Delaware, nearly all of them nurtured by the Old Side, came to be coveted and courted as feeders for the College of New Jersey.

But the great cause which secured and hastened a reunion was precisely that "wall" which had surrounded both these bodies all the while of their apparent separation, which Dickinson himself had said, in 1729, would fall "if so much as a fox would go over it"—the Westminster Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms and Directory of Government, Discipline and Worship. This palladium, as well as bulwark around them, rallied all the parties, restrained the factions, gathered the fragments without any loss, and proved once for all to the ages that a full creed is not a dividing wedge, but the very handle of concord, and a witnessing Church that testifies for Christ in her own words to the whole extent of her attainment will never be left "a portion for foxes." It was the centennial time of our old standards, and never had they been hailed with glory and enthusiasm on every side as when history came to make up the results of a world-wide revival.

The reunion was accomplished in 1758, and the name then given to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was "The Synod of New York and Philadelphia." A few months before

that consummation Jonathan Edwards died; a few months before him his son-in-law, Aaron Burr, had died; Jonathan Dickinson ten years before him. Andrews, Brainerd and Robinson had also departed, three apostolic men and missionaries, one to Philadelphia, another to the Indians and a third to Virginia. So had Samuel Blair, "the incomparable," and John Thompson "the conservative."

What a roll of renowned and sainted men of the interval might be called who had been written on this side and that of the division on earth, and were by that time summoned away to the Church of the firstborn that are written in heaven! But a host remained for a new era—the Alisons, the Tennents, the Finleys, the Smiths, Prime, Pemberton, Pierson, Rodgers, Roan, Miller, Spencer, Beatty, Bostwick, Buell, Robert Cross, John Blair, James Brown, George Duffield, and that young man who had charmed with his eloquence the intolerance of the South, and prophesied of Washington at Braddock's defeat, and gathered endowment for Princeton from the opposite hemisphere, and was just now to enter on the presidency of Nassau Hall—Samuel Davies.

One hundred ministers began to assemble in the synod now, and to represent nearly twice that number of nominal churches. Gilbert Tennent was the first moderator, Robert Cross the second. "Protesters" on both sides of the quarrel and schism

were now successors to each other in harmonious line. If Gilbert was first in the honor of presiding over the united body, Robert was first in constructing the platform on which he was elevated. The plan of reunion embodied every plank of principle on which the Old Side had been standing for seventeen years, and every item of additional incorporation would have been at any time assented to if it had been overtured without demanding the formal cancelling of their "protest."

It was indeed ordered well that mere "protest" should not be allowed again to disrupt a synod. It was equally well defined that the work of God's own Spirit in the ministrations of truth should not be gainsaid because of paroxysms in the flesh which might incidentally attend it. The existence of a college among us on this side of New England was now conceded as a sufficient reason for the synod to intrust the presbyteries with independent judgment on the qualifications in learning of candidates for the ministry. And the sad disruption of so many churches by the "intrusions" chargeable on the Brunswick party in the day of their heat was accepted as a fact which could not be remedied in reconstruction, beyond enactment that the territorial integrity of parishes should not be disturbed in that way again. With few exceptions, the Old Side were content with this adjustment, because it was

seen upon every hand that good had been brought out of that evil, and in that very thing divine Providence had rebuked the grudging reluctancy with which so many congregations of the Old Side resisted the work of church extension against the tide of ever-swelling populations. In short, the distinctive gains to the New Side in that memorable compact of reunion were all in the direction of the Old side as well—Westminster endorsed again; order restored; revivals discriminated; majorities vindicated; minorities made free; sound faith and good life accredited as true religion without inquisition after mental states and a prescribed order of experiences. Never was there a more perfect union, never a more noble and frank avowal on both sides, and never a more complete symbol of reconciliation, than the plan of reunion in 1758. Of course it distinguished between essential and non-essential things in the submission of conscience to that bond. But it stipulated for no liberty beyond this; no reduction; no revision; no compliance with expediency. And surely it had no change of the constitution kept in abeyance or in secret on either side, to be sprung upon the whole Church as soon as it could be welded together in the reconstruction.

Thus restored and harmonized again, the Church of our fathers, with a banner streaming at full

length in every fold, advanced to another stage of militancy, for which her equipment, that had been gained in the conflicts of principle, and structures of liberty, civil and religious—twin towers, that she alone had studied how to build distinctly and together—prepared her to act as no other denomination could act in those great events which filled the sequel of a century from her beginning in this land —missions, wars, and institutions.

For a whole generation she had to fight the savages on her border almost alone. The proprietaries of Pennsylvania and early governors and councils of this commonwealth strangely allowed the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians in her frontier valley, with very little help in men or money, to bear the brunt of a warfare the most cruel that is recorded in the annals of our country. And yet from the sentries of that exposed and slaughtered community there always went forth the most benignant friends of the poor Indians to enforce the faith of treaties and keep the reservations from intrusion and give them the light and peace of the gospel. When the Quaker government of Pennsylvania outwitted the Delaware Indians, in 1737, with a bargain for as much land "to extend back in the woods" as a man could walk over in a day and a half, that small but powerful tribe was irritated greatly when the white men secured by advertisement and lavish

bounty a pedestrian who could walk as fast as an Indian could run; but they had no remedy. When, again, the Six Nations made their memorable cession at Albany in 1754 to the same authorities of what the latter had been carefully indefinite to describe in metes and bounds which the savages could comprehend, and all middle Pennsylvania was taken as a part of the claim, with a manifest purpose to push it on to the setting sun, the red man was enraged; and Braddock's defeat the year after was but the beginning of horrors which could be stayed only with an honest concession that the summit of the Alleghany Mountain should be the limit of that Albany grant. On the other hand, the border valley of the Presbyterians was no sooner constituted a county, Cumberland, than its authorities enlisted with eager determination to repress all dishonest dealing with the Indians. When a few rash adventurers, mostly Germans, but with some Scotch-Irish, moved into Sherman's valley and other places beyond the Kittochtinny or North Mountain, before the cession of that region at Albany, the Indians complained of the encroachment; and instantly Benjamin Chambers and George Croghan, with other magistrates and a considerable force of men from the Presbyterian churches, urged by their ministers, crossed the mountain in 1742 and constrained the settlers to quit their clearings, and even burn their

cabins in sight of the Indians, that justice might be done and savage resentment avoided.[1] Such was the uniform spirit of equity toward the Indians on the part of a people whom certain flippant chroniclers describe in this connection as "a pertinacious and pugnacious race," whose trespass on the Indian territory was the main provocation which leagued the Indians with the French in the bloody wars of that age. As they were the sufferers chiefly, they have been falsely accused as the transgressors. The provincial government of Pennsylvania, in its jealousy of Scotch-Irish energy and adventure, its impotency in the hands of cunning knaves who contrived treaties and got for a price the privilege of selling rum to the Indians, has to this day escaped the just condemnation which history finds out in searching for the causes of those horrid calamities that made so much bloody ground on the bosom of this commonwealth.

"The Widows' Fund," the oldest corporation for the relief of desolated families in America, began its benignant work among the necessitous on the frontier. In 1760 it sent to Great Britain Charles Beatty, who had been the Irish peddler that in attempting to sell his wares to William Tennent of Neshaminy, by praising them in Latin, did it so well

[1] See *Irish and Scotch Early Settlers of Pennsylvania*, by the Hon. George Chambers, 1856.

that the noble teacher was taken and Beatty himself was taken with the conviction that he ought to stay there and study for the ministry. His success in gathering funds for the corporation was wonderful. Even the General Assembly of Scotland ordered a collection to help his cause throughout the churches. But when he returned home, a dispute arose with Provost Smith, of Philadelphia, respecting the distribution of these funds—whether the disbursement should be a measure of broad philanthropy to comprehend all the distressed who had been driven from their homes by the Indians, or a special distribution to the Presbyterian sufferers whose husbands, brothers or sons had perished in war with the savages. At length it was determined by the synod of 1766, in accordance with a request of the corporation, that he and George Duffield, of Carlisle, should explore the condition of the whole border to learn its necessities, and especially the spiritual condition of the frontier settlements, and also what opportunities might be had for giving the gospel to the Indians. Beatty was full of missionary zeal, having been much with Brainerd and deeply interested in the Indian school supported long and liberally by the synod. So far as can now be ascertained, he was the first Protestant minister to preach beyond the Alleghanies, when he preached in 1758, at Fort Duquesne, to the troops of Forbes' army

that took possession of that post after it was evacuated by the French. And now in this mission of the synod he was the first to preach on the soil of that magnificent State, Ohio, having penetrated the wilderness some hundred and thirty miles and obtained on the Muskingum a knowledge of the Indians to encourage the establishment of permanent missionary enterprise. It is therefore a fact worthy of commemoration that when we say, "Corporations have no soul," this one, the oldest of all among Presbyterians, stands an illustrious exception, the first thing to incite the synod of New York and Philadelphia to move alike in foreign and domestic missions whilst in pursuit of its own distinct and legitimate object, the succor of "poor and distressed" families of Presbyterian ministers.

That same meeting of the synod which sent Beatty and Duffield to reconnoiter settlements on the frontier and open a pathway to the Indian towns beyond was a jubilant meeting, full of gratulation, loyalty and patriotism. It voted an address to His Majesty for the repeal of the Stamp Act. And these brethren found the whole border full of the same enthusiasm. Every field, every stump, was vocal with the same rejoicing. Indeed, fields and stumps have always been the scenic joy of this denomination.

"The unaccountable humor," as Makemie called

it, of the American people to live in the country and cultivate the lands rather than dwell in villages and build up cities, has, in spite of his remonstrance, remained the humor of the Presbyterian people. They have been emphatically from the beginning a rural church. It would seem as if, in this characteristic, the stability of earth itself has been imparted to this ecclesiastical system in making the bulk of her pastors *chorepiscopal* bishops in our assemblies, and making agricultural work the sinew both of money and virtue in defending the institutions of the Church and the liberty of the land. No sign of the times could be more at war with our traditions and ominous of weak degeneracy than the ambition of ministers to quit the country for the city, as if a rural parish were fit only to begin with and a metropolitan pulpit were the goal of aspiration, and the Holy Ghost were in waiting for the work of "translating ministers" rather than keeping them to "make the wilderness and the solitary place glad for them." Perish the policy which, either in education or industry, would make our youth discontented with a home in the country! When the rage of fanaticism or frivolities of fashion have wasted our churches and emptied our fanes in the town, how often have numbers been replaced by fresh importations from the country of well catechized believers who brought with them revivals of family

religion, and thus became "restorers of paths to dwell in"!

We know what kind of soldiers our Presbyterians of the field have sent to every war that has been a war of defense. Before the Declaration of Independence at Philadelphia was written it began to be composed in the fields of the valley and along the mountain tops, from Mecklenburg to Carlisle and from Carlisle to Hannahstown, over the Alleghany Mountains and among the clearings of Westmoreland County. No historical finesse can rob the Presbyterian yeomanry of their credit in having sown with broadcast unanimity the seminal thought, if not phrases also, of that immortal document. It was therefore a philosophical justice in history that the only minister of any denomination who signed it was John Witherspoon, the representative of Presbyterian education and a regular teacher of theology at Princeton half a century before Archibald Alexander was elected to the office. More than a year before he signed it the tidings of bloodshed at Lexington and Concord started companies from the frontiers of our Church, and mainly from the churches of the Cumberland Valley, to anticipate Washington himself at the siege of Boston, and make the Revolution quick as it was inevitable. Veteran captains were found there quite ready, and numerous almost as ministers and elders, and all of

them eager again to muster the host and fire its patriotic ardor.

But "the commencement of the War of the Revolution" is the end of my task, and I desist with filial reverence and affection at a center of patriotism even on the border of our civilization when that war began.

From the War of the Revolution to the Organization of the General Assembly

I

CONDITION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT THE OPENING OF THIS PERIOD (1775)

THE storm of the Revolutionary war broke upon a people more universally peaceable, loyal, intelligent and Christian than any other in the history of the world. With few exceptions the entire population belonged, by voluntary adherence, to some one of the various fractions of the Christian Church.

Speculative atheism there was none; of subtle infidelity hardly a trace; and the coarse and brutal infidelity of Paine and his school was only beginning to make its way amid the lower stratum of society. Nowhere was education more universal; nowhere was the Bible more the book of the home, or the sanctuary dearer to the heart; nowhere were manners simpler, habits more frugal, domestic virtue and official integrity more sacred; nowhere were the minister and the schoolmaster in higher esteem. Taking the colonies at large, the Church existed in

as pure a state as had ever been realized in this her mixed and militant condition.

But she existed in the form of a multitude of sects—all the chief sects, at least, that had already originated in England, with the addition of a few transplanted from the Continent of Europe. Of these only the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians have any special significance in relation to the period we are now contemplating. And popularly the first two were regarded as one. The religious element involved in the rebellion was invariably spoken of, whether in or out of New England, as Presbyterian.[1]

UIJT MEIN HAUSS
DE 8te AO. 1762.

TO THE HON. SIR WM. JOHNSON :—

That ij reit these letter en trouble you bij these ij be forced for it: the reason is because ij heard yesterday in the castle that the Bostoniers were designed to erect schools in everij castle by choosing uijt two jung boijs for to be send in nieu engelland to be instructed there and them should instruct the others in proper learning. now learning is good en is most necessarij amongs the haddens that cannot be contradicted but ij want to know what design as it is to introduce their own Presbijteren church than can it not be allowed en as it prejudice our church en church ceremonies, etc.—*Doc. History of New York*, iv. 307.

Mr. Keith writes to the Secretary of the Venerable Society, etc., that "if a minister be not sent with the first conveniency, Presbyterian ministers from New England would swarm into these countries and prevent the increase of the Church.—*Episcop. Histor. Coll.*, 1851, p. xxiii.

[1] See Letter of the Rev. Jacob Oel, Episcopal missionary among the Mohawks, to Sir William Johnson.

The Baptists already existed in considerable numbers, having perhaps three hundred or more congregations. But they were without organization of any kind, without an educated ministry, their preachers being small tradesmen or mechanics and the flocks consisting of the more ignorant and enthusiastic classes in the middle and southern colonies. It is only toward the close of this period and in connection with the struggle for religious liberty in Virginia that they make any considerable figure.[1]

The Methodists in England and America still made a part of the Anglican Church, and throughout the Revolutionary period acted in sympathy with it. Mr. Whitfield, in writing from America to the bishop of Oxford and others, though commenting in very severe terms on the character of the Episcopal clergy in the colonies, yet invariably describes them as belonging to "our Church." During the war for independence they are in no way to be distinguished from other Episcopalians. In England, John Wesley at first employed his pen in defense of the measures of Parliament, and reproduced as his own, without acknowledgment, the arguments of Samuel Johnson's *Taxation no*

[1] See *History of the Baptist Interest in the United States*, by the Rev. Rufus Babcock, D. D., Poughkeepsie, N. Y., in *Quart. Register* for 1841.

Tyranny.[1] He afterwards changed his views, and in a letter to Lord North remonstrated against the war, declaring that "in spite of all his long-rooted prejudices as a churchman and a loyalist, he cannot avoid thinking, if he think at all, that the colonists are an oppressed people asking nothing more than their legal rights." He adds that it is idle to think of conquering America: "Twenty thousand British troops could not do it."

The Roman Catholics were still few in number and appear during this period in no ecclesiastical capacity. In 1775, they had no more than fifty congregations in the colonies, and half that number of clergy. Even in Maryland they constituted not more than one-twentieth part of the population.

Quakerism had been introduced into America early in the century, and had caught with great rapidity. The lofty pretensions and bold "testifyings" of the early preachers, and the punishment they brought upon themselves by their excesses, recommended their views to the loose religious radicalism which hung on the skirts of the New

[1] Wesley's *Calm Address to the American Colonies*. The offensive sentiments of this address, and its broad and subsequently confessed plagiarisms, exposed the author to very severe criticism. See Dr. Toplady's *Old Fox tarred and feathered, occasioned by what is called Mr. John Wesley's Calm Address to our American colonies*.—Toplady's *Works*, v. 441.

England churches. They throve for a while on "persecution." In the middle colonies the high character of the grantee of Pennsylvania, not yet defaced by the sharp pens of later critics, and the pacific character and benevolent aims of his administration, attracted numerous adherents. Quakers swarmed on both sides the Delaware—disputatious, high-flying, theological Quakers, non-combatant as respects carnal weapons, but ever ready for dialectical brawl and battle. They were already broken up by schisms. George Keith, a busy, stirring, hot-headed brother, who subsequently conformed to the Anglican Church and became an ultra-zealous Episcopal missionary in the colonies, had a considerable following called Keithian or Christian Quakers. On the other hand, the Foxonian or Deistical Quakers, who are described by Messrs. Keith and Talbot as "no better than heathens," were passionately enthusiastic for the "inner light" and against the authority of divine revelation. The two factions were destroying each other; and it is worth noticing that of all the sects extant in the colonies in the Revolutionary period, the Quakers are the only one that has not thriven; all the others have multiplied a thousandfold. They alone have dwindled till they are now arrived at the verge of extinction. As concerns the Revolutionary struggle, a few "Deistical Quakers," like Benjamin Franklin,

acted an influential part, but as a sect they had neither part nor lot in the matter.

When we speak of the Christian Church in connection with the struggle for independence, we have occasion, therefore, to notice only Presbyterianism and Episcopacy; always remembering that that imperfect form of Presbyterianism called Congregationalism existed exclusively in New England.

As introductory to the history of the Presbyterian Church during the Revolutionary period, it is necessary to consider briefly its condition at the opening of the scene. In all the provinces south of and including New York, except Pennsylvania, the Episcopal Church was either expressly established by law or at least peculiarly favored by the colonial governments. Episcopal churches and parsonages were built by the aid of the royal governors, and often by public tax. The clergy were salaried by assessments on the property of the citizens at large. Their stipends were fixed by law, and were collected, where it was necessary (and practicable), by execution and distress.

In New York the profligate Lord Cornbury—bankrupt in character and fortune—was a zealous friend of "the present happy establishment in Church and State."[1] In New Jersey, by one of

[1] See letter of the Rev. Dr. Auchmuty to Sir William Johnson of date 20th May, 1770.

those retributions which often attend unhallowed love, the natural son of Benjamin Franklin, the last royal governor of the province, was a bitter enemy of both the political and religious liberty for which his father contended. Maryland, originally a Roman Catholic proprietary grant, was organized ecclesiastically as a branch of the Church of England, containing in 1775 about twenty parishes. In Virginia, where the union of Church and State was closest, the clergy were "presented" to their "livings" by the governor, and the value of the benefice was calculated, as also in Maryland, in the great staple of the province. The salary was settled by act of legislature in 1721 at 16,000 pounds of tobacco, or a cash equivalent of eighteen shillings the hundred pounds.[1] To every parsonage was attached a glebe of not less than 200 acres. In fact, the "ancient dominion" exhibited nearly as perfect an example of a Church-and-State establishment as the mother-country itself. Virginia was simply a cis-Atlantic magnified Hampshire or Bucks, where the clergy and the squirearchy held carnival and royal governors made it their ambition to be nursing-fathers to "the Church."

[1] In Maryland the salary was, in some cases, much larger, amounting to thirty, and even forty, thousand pounds of tobacco. The cash value of the salaries was from £50 to £80 colonial currency, which was depreciated in the various colonies from twenty-five to fifty per cent below sterling value.

The parish ministers came from England, and were mostly such as England could well afford to spare. The "Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," chartered in 1701, exerted itself to send out chaplains and missionaries, but the name of the society represented a sentiment which was then only feebly nascent in England. The funds were small and the candidates few. Rather than send none, the society sent such as they could get; and what these were the complaints and remonstrances from the colonies too clearly indicate. "Many of them," observes Dr. Hawks, "were every way unfitted for their stations. The precariousness of the tenure by which they held their livings contributed not a little to beget in them an indifference to their duties, and the irregularities and crimes of an unworthy clergyman could not be visited effectually with the severities of ecclesiastical censure. Far removed from his diocesan, and standing in little awe of the authorities of the Episcopal commissary, he sometimes offended religion and morals with impunity, and still remained in the Church, a reproach to her ministry." [1]

[1] *Contributions to Ecclesiastical History*, etc., pp. 88, 89.

Mr. Whitefield wrote to the "Venerable Society," etc., under date of November 30, 1740: "The state of the Church of England in America is at a very low ebb, and will in all probability be much worse—nay, at last dwindled into nothing—unless care be taken to send over missionaries that are better qualified for the

"In numerous instances," observes the Rev. Dr. Babcock, "we have heard from the lips of old men lamentable descriptions of the immoral and profligate lives of their former rectors. Two or three days in each week during the season the parson spent in fox-hunting with his irreligious parishioners, and the hunt closed with bacchanalian orgies in which he usually bore the leading part. We have seen a manuscript volume of poetry composed by one of these Virginia shepherds that for amatory levity would have raised a blush on the cheeks of Horace.[1] Many came over, such as wore black coats and could babble in a pulpit, roar in a tavern, exact from their parishioners, and by their dissolute

pastoral office. It is too evident that most of them are corrupt in their principles and immoral in their practices, and many of them such as could not stand their trials amongst the Dissenters or were discarded by them for their profaneness and irregularities. Our Church seems to be their last refuge," etc.—*Episcopal Historical Collection*, 1851, p. 129.

Colonel Heathcote takes a more cheerful view of the society's influence, so far, at least, as Connecticut was concerned. "I really believe," he observes, "that more than half the people in that government think our Church to be little better than the Papist. But —I bless God for it—the society has robbed them of their best argument, which was the ill lives of our clergy that came into these parts, and the truth is I have not seen many good men but of the society's sending."—*Doc. History of New York*, iv. 122.

But Mr. Whitefield calls even the society's missionaries "ungodly despicable ministers."

[1] See *American Quarterly Register*, 1841.

lives destroy rather than feed their flocks."[1] A great writer, who in statements of fact is as true to history as in his portraitures of character he is true to nature, observes: "Unlike some of the neighboring provinces, Virginia was a Church of England colony. The clergymen were paid by the State and had glebes allotted to them; and there being no Church of England bishop yet in America, the colonists were obliged to import their divines from the mother country. Such as came were not naturally of the very best or most eloquent kind of pastors. Noblemen's hangers-on, insolvent parsons who had quarreled with justice or the bailiff, brought their stained cassocks into the colony in the hopes of finding a living."[2] The condition of things was equally bad in Maryland, where Mr. Bancroft says, "Ruffians, fugitives from justice, men stained by intemperance and lust, dishonored the surplices they wore."[3]

Presbyterians, even in those colonies or parts of colonies where they composed the great majority, were "dissenters," enjoying a precarious toleration. They could preach only by special license and in licensed meetinghouses. Nothing was more common than for them to be called before justices or

[1] Dr. Hawks' *Ecclesiastical History of Virginia*, p. 65, quoted from a contemporaneous writer.

[2] *The Virginians*, by W. M. Thackeray, chapter v.

[3] Bancroft's *History*, iv. 129.

governors and threatened or fined for illegally preaching the gospel. Such was the treatment that Francis Makemie, George Hampton and John McNish met with in the early part of the century; and down to the Revolution the experiences of the Presbyterian clergy were often of the same sort. In 1618 a law was passed in Virginia which enacted that every person "should go to *church* on Sundays and holidays, or lye neck and heels that night and be a slave to the colony the following day." For the second offense he was to be a slave a week and the third a year. In 1642 a law was passed that "no minister should be permitted to officiate in the country but such as shall produce to the governor a testimonial that he hath received ordination from some bishop in England, and shall then subscribe to be conformable to the orders and constitutions of the Church of England; and if any other person pretending himself to be a minister shall, contrary to this act, presume to teach or preach publicly or privately, the governor and council are hereby desired and empowered to suspend and silence the person so offending, and upon his obstinate persistence to compel him to depart the country with the first convenience. Several of these laws were afterwards repealed or the penalties mitigated, but they remained severe until the Revolution."[1]

[1] Dr. Miller's *Life of Dr. John Rodgers*, p. 28.

It was quite in the natural order of things, therefore, that when the struggle broke out between Great Britain and her colonies the Episcopal and the Presbyterian clergy should take different sides. The former were entirely satisfied with the existing order and had nothing to gain by a change. They were, of course, the friends of a government which favored them, which gave them peculiar privileges, among others the privilege of looking down on and harassing all other Christians as dissenters. Their own instincts all tended the same way. They were English born or had been educated and ordained in England. They owed ecclesiastical allegiance to the English episcopate, or at near hand to the resident commissary of the bishop of London. The spiritual peers and the clergy "at home" all lent a zealous support to the measures of the Parliament for coercing the colonies. It was too much to expect that the Episcopal clergy here should separate themselves from the body to which they belonged. They simply stuck to the principles of loyalty and allegiance that were natural to them in the circumstances.

The Rev. Dr. Inglis, rector of Trinity Church, New York, writing to the secretary of the "Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel" in 1776, says, "I have the pleasure to assure you that all the society's missionaries, without excepting

one in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and so far as I can learn in all the New England colonies, have proved themselves loyal and faithful subjects in these trying times, and have to the utmost of their power opposed the spirit of disaffection. I must add that all the *other* clergy of our Church in the above-named colonies have observed the same line of conduct; and although their joint endeavors could not wholly prevent the rebellion, yet they checked it considerably for some time, and prevented many thousands from plunging into it."

He adds that very few of the *laity* who had either property or character joined in the rebellion.

This latter assertion had many and signal exceptions, or rather outside of New York and Connecticut had very little basis of fact. But the Episcopal *clergy*, at least in the breaking out of the Revolution, found themselves in broad and bitter antagonism with the spirit and views of the people. They could not reconcile themselves to read the service leaving out the prayers for the king, nor could they read them without subjecting themselves to interruptions, threats and a possible experience of tar and feathers. They took the safe course of demitting their functions, and shook off the dust from their feet as a testimony against their rebellious parishioners.

The Episcopal Church, therefore, which one hun-

dred years ago numbered about two hundred and fifty clergy of all sorts (except bishops), suddenly and universally disappeared. The temples were left, but the priests had departed. After the melancholy extinguishment of Mr. Duché, not one of them, with the exception of Dr. White, officiated as chaplain in Congress, and only Dr. Griffith and two or three more as chaplains in the army—a neglect with which it has been impossible to charge the Episcopal clergy in any period since. A few resolute parsons, like Mr. Beach in Connecticut and Dr. Inglis in New York, continued a while longer to pray for the king. Perhaps Dr. Inglis himself read the last collect for King George that was ever offered after the colonies developed into States. That distinguished and justly honored minister and (later) prelate, William White, states that he read the prayer for the king the last time on the Sunday preceding the 4th of July, 1776.

So it resulted that the Established Church and the colonial officials were on one side, and the AMERICAN PEOPLE on the other; just as, a few years later, it came to pass in France that the *nation* found itself struggling for freedom against the noblesse and the clergy.

Whatever may have been true in the history of earlier struggles between prerogative and liberty in England, it is quite unnecessary to claim that there

is any natural relationship between Episcopacy and monarchy, or any vital repugnance between it and popular institutions. It is even maintained by distinguished writers of that persuasion that there is a singularly close analogy between the constitution of their Church and the political Constitution of this country. Certainly no one will pretend that since the establishment of independence there have been any purer patriots or stauncher friends of liberty than the clergy and laity of the Episcopal Church. It is with no disposition, therefore, to cast reproach upon that large and intelligent Christian body, but simply because the truth of history requires it, that the fact is stated of the nearly universal as well as very bitter Toryism of the Episcopal clergy during the Revolutionary period. They continually wrote to England maligning the characters and ridiculing the efforts of the patriot leaders. They encouraged the ministry with assurances of certain and not distant success;[1] when the appeal was made "to arms and to the God of battles," they withdrew into obscurity, fled to Nova Scotia or returned to England.

We have all, perhaps, seen a coarse engraving purporting to represent the offering of "the first

[1] "I have not a doubt" (wrote Dr. Inglis in 1776) "but with the blessing of Providence His Majesty's arms will be successful and finally crush this unnatural rebellion."—*Doc. Hist. of New York*, iii, 1064.

prayer in Congress." The rotund and florid officiating chaplain in the front, clad in surplice, is the Rev. Jacob Duché, described by one of his brethren at the time as a "most amiable youth, of captivating eloquence."

The implication of the picture would seem to be that it was the Episcopal Church in the person of this patriotic and captivating "churchman" which pronounced her benediction on the opening struggle.[1]

The Rev. Jacob Duché was by birth a Philadelphian. His grandfather Anthony, a French refugee, had acquired property here, and on some occasion lent William Penn a little money. Thirty pounds of this remained unpaid. Penn offered Mr. Duché in satisfaction the entire square lying between Market and Arch and Third and Fourth streets, which he declined.

Jacob grew up a promising boy, and was sent to England to perfect his education. He studied at the University of Cambridge, in due time received Episcopal ordination, returned home, and about 1770 became rector of Christ's Church, Philadelphia.

In the Congress of 1776, on the nomination of

[1] On the celebration in Carpenters' Hall, Philadelphia, of the centenary of the First Congress, the portrait of Mr. Duché occupied a conspicuous position over the head of the chairman—with how little fitness the story here recited shows.

Samuel Adams, he was elected chaplain. He had previously acted in that capacity for the Continental Congress the year before; and now, robed in full canonicals, he came forward to offer the first prayer after the Declaration of Independence. The singularly appropriate lesson for the morning was the thirty-fifth Psalm: "*Plead thou my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me, and fight thou with them that fight against me. Awake, and stand up to judge my quarrel; avenge thou my cause, my God and my Lord.*"

Having finished the lesson, the chaplain laid aside the prayer book, and stretching forth his arms broke out with great fervor of manner in the recitation of a highly-appropriate precomposed prayer: "*Look down in mercy, we beseech thee* (he prayed), *on these our American States, who have fled from the rod of the oppressor and thrown themselves on thy gracious protection. Give them wisdom in council and valor in the field; defeat the malicious designs of our cruel adversaries. Oh, let the voice of thine unerring justice, sounding in their hearts, constrain them to drop the weapons of war from their unnerved hands in the day of battle.*"

This glow of patriotic enthusiasm lasted for three months. Within that time New York was occupied and Philadelphia threatened by the British. Mr. Duché's faith, which apparently had in it little of

the substance of things hoped for, began to waver. He resigned his chaplaincy and withdrew into temporary obscurity. The following year the disasters of the patriot arms increased. Lord Howe defeated the insurgents at the Brandywine and occupied Philadelphia. Then Mr. Duché once more came forth upon the scene. Providence was evidently frowning on the rebel cause; and far be it from Mr. Duché that he should be found fighting against God! He hastened to renounce his rebellion and "throw himself on the gracious protection" of Lord Howe. All this might easily have been forgotten; but with a bold stroke for immortality, he had the sublime impudence to write to General Washington urging him to pursue a similar course. He alleges that the cause of the revolted colonies was as hopeless as it was godless, represents the army, both officers and men, as a vulgar and undisciplined rabble, and recommends Washington to disperse Congress at the point of the bayonet. Having thus given the highest possible evidence of recovered loyalty, Mr. Duché sailed for England. Washington laid the insulting letter before Congress and directed the bearer to inform Mr. Duché that if he had had any idea of its nature he should have returned it unopened.

I feel no hesitation in making this commentary on the pictorial fraud referred to, since this frivolous

renegade will be dismissed with equal contempt by the Church he dishonored as by Christians of every other denomination.

II

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

THE course of the Presbyterian clergy, both during the war and throughout the whole series of events leading to it, is so broadly written on the pages of history that did it not seem to make a necessary part of a story like this I should content myself with barely alluding to it. It was exactly seventy years before, that their first presbytery had been organized in the city of Philadelphia, with only seven ministers. During this period of "Babylonian captivity," discouraged as they had continually been by the royal governors, fined and shut up in jail under pretext of their preaching without a license, their churches wrested from them, their congregations doubly taxed to sustain their own clergy and those of the Episcopal Church also, —they had yet multiplied to about one hundred ministers and twice that number of congregations. At the breaking out of the Revolutionary War they

were distributed into eleven presbyteries. The presbyteries of New York, Dutchess and Suffolk, with about thirty ministers, were mostly in New York. New Brunswick, with nine ministers, in New Jersey. The First and Second Philadelphia and Lewes, with twenty members, in Pennsylvania. New Castle, with eight ministers, and Donegal, with thirteen, were in Delaware and Maryland, Hanover in Virginia, with perhaps twelve ministers, and Orange, with fifteen, in North Carolina. With absolute unanimity these pastors and their people committed themselves to the doubtful and desperate struggle for independence. Heterogeneous as they were in origin—part New England Congregationalists, part Dutchmen of New Amsterdam, part Scotch-Irish, part Huguenots, part Highlanders, exiles of "the '45"—the common element of a Presbyterian polity and a Calvinistic theology fused them into one patriotic mass, glowing with an intense passion for civil and religious liberty. They openly took the attitude, and consented to the name and the responsibility, of *rebels* against the British government.

It was no doubt a zeal for religious, quite as much as for political liberty, that impelled them into this position—a sentiment that did not operate with equal force in New England, where the Congregationalists, instead of suffering as dissenters,

were themselves an established Church, able and not wholly indisposed to lay a heavy hand on other denominations.

Dr. Inglis says, "Although civil liberty was the *ostensible object*, the *bait* that was flung out to catch the populace at large and engage them in the rebellion, yet it is now past all doubt that an abolition of the Church of England was one of the principal ends aimed at, and hence the unanimity of the dissenters in this business. I have it from good authority that the Presbyterian ministers, at a synod where most of them in the middle colonies were collected, passed a resolve to support the Continental Congress in all their measures. This, and this only, can account for the uniformity of their conduct, for *I do not know one of them*, nor have I been able, after strict inquiry, *to hear of any*, who did not by preaching and every effort in their power promote all the measures of the Congress, however extravagant." [1]

It was not, however, by any passionate impulse, or by any fraudulent representation of their leaders, that they were brought into an attitude so much at variance with all their principles as Christians and all their instincts as subjects. The spirit of the Presbyterian Church, like that of the Episcopal,

[1] *State of the Anglo-American Church in* 1776, by the Rev. Charles Inglis, *Doc. Hist. of New York*, iv, 1048.

though perhaps in a somewhat less intense degree, is conservative. Comprehending in its clergy a body of educated as well as profoundly religious men, and in its membership mostly the upper and middle classes, containing few poor and none ignorant, with a large stake, therefore, in the stability of society,—the Presbyterian Church is necessarily pledged to order, loyalty and the maintenance of existing institutions. Presbyterianism has always been in quick sympathy with constitutional government, but is by no necessity hostile to monarchy. If at one time, while fighting the battle of English liberties, it was found in deadly and fatal collision with the sovereign, it was also found, in its recoil from anarchy, forward in rebuilding the throne. It was the English Presbyterians who joined with the army to bring about the Restoration; and they are not otherwise to be blamed for the consequences than as men may be blamed who fly from petty tyrants to the throne, and in their zeal for order are too little on their guard against treachery. They bound the king, so far as oaths could bind so "universal a villain," to the cause of religion and righteousness. They were, of course, betrayed; but it has taken several generations since to bring the world to a complete realization of the bottomless folly and faithlessness of the house of Stuart.

The Presbyterians of the American colonies were

imbued with a spirit of intense loyalty to the British government. In no part of the empire was there a more enthusiastic reverence for the throne. The provincials gloried in the title and claimed the rights of British subjects. They detested the brutal radicalism of John Wilkes and the English mob. In the admirable pastoral letter addressed to the churches by the synod of New York and Philadelphia on the breaking out of hostilities they say: "In carrying on this important struggle let every opportunity be taken to express your attachment and respect to our sovereign King George and to the revolution principles by which his august family was seated on the British throne. We recommend, indeed, not only allegiance to him from duty and principle, as the first magistrate of the empire, but esteem and reverence for the person of the prince who has merited well of his subjects on many accounts, and who has probably been misled into the late and the present measures by those about him. It gives us the greatest pleasure to say, from our own certain knowledge of all belonging to our communion, that the present opposition to the measures of the ministry does not in the least arise from disaffection to the king or a desire of separation from the parent state. We are happy in being able with truth to affirm, that no part of America would either have approved or permitted such in-

sults as have been offered to the sovereign in Great Britain. We expect you, therefore, to continue in the same disposition and not to suffer oppression or injury itself to provoke you into anything which may seem to betray contrary sentiments. Let it ever appear that you only desire the preservation and security of those rights which belong to you *as freemen and* BRITONS, and that reconciliation upon these terms is your most ardent desire."[1]

This was in May, 1775, a month after the slaughter at Lexington and the disastrous retreat of the British troops upon Boston.

This sentiment of affection for the person of the sovereign was with great difficulty rooted out from the hearts of the colonists. They wept with at least conventional tears the death of George II and hailed with enthusiastic hopes the accession of his grandson to the throne.

That brilliant and too brief light of the American pulpit—the *Doctor Seraphicus* of the colonial ministry—Samuel Davies, in his sermon on the death of that profligate Hanoverian prince. George II, broke out into such strains as these:—

"George is no more! George the mighty, the just, the gentle, the wise, George the father of Britain and her colonies, the guardian of laws and liberty, the protector of the oppressed, the arbiter

[1] See *Minutes of the Synod*, p. 468.

of Europe, the terror of tyrants and of France! George, the friend of man, the benefactor of millions, is no more. Britain expresses her sorrow in national groans. Europe reëchoes to the melancholy sound. This remote American continent shares in the loyal sympathy. The wide intermediate Atlantic rolls the tide of grief to these distant shores." And after pages more in this *maestoso vein* the strain changes to a joyful *allegro* as Mr. Davies turns to hail the newly-risen star of British monarchy. "*But I* retract the melancholy thought (he says). George still lives, he still adorns his throne, he still blesses the world in the person of his royal descendant and successor; and if the early appearance of genius, humanity, condescension, the spirit of liberty and love of his people, if British birth, education and connections, if the wishes and prayers of every lover of his country, have any efficacy, George the Third will reign like George the Second. Hail, desponding religion! lift up thy drooping head and triumph. Virtue, thou heaven-born exile, return to court! Young George invites thee. George declares himself thy early friend and patron. Vice, thou triumphant monster, with all thy infernal train, retire, abscond and fly to thy native hell! Young George forbids thee to appear at court, in the army, the navy or any of thy usual haunts. What happy days are before us when RE-

LIGION and GEORGE shall reign!" And then, soaring on the wings of Virgil's prophetic muse and contemplating the coming *Saturnia regna*, he exclaimed, "Such a presage renders the blessings we shall receive under the reign of George the Third almost as sure as those we have received under that of George the Second." This (may I reverently add) he spoke not of himself, but being a prophet he foresaw obscurely the benefits which the patriotic and conscientious stubbornness of the sovereign would be the means of conferring on the colonists; for surely, if the prophetic charisma has ever lighted on any of the sons of men since the days of the apostles, it was upon him who, twenty years before Braddock's only surviving aid was called to the command of the American armies, spoke of "that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom Providence seems to have preserved in so signal a manner for some important service to his country."[1]

Let us think kindly of that narrow-minded, obstinate, devout, exemplary man and king whom our fathers were reluctantly forced to defy and disown. His reign signalized the era of decency in the British court which has broadened into the

[1] *Religion and Patriotism the Constituents of a good Soldier*, a sermon preached to Captain Overton's independent company of volunteers, raised in Hanover County, Virginia, August 17, 1755.

high-toned morality of the present reign. "The improvement in public morals at the close of the eighteenth century," observes Lord Campbell, "may mainly be ascribed to George the Third and his queen, who not only by their bright example but by their well-directed efforts greatly discouraged the profligacy which was introduced at the Restoration, and which continued with little abatement till their time."[1]

"O brothers speaking the same dear mother-tongue," said that beautiful genius who recited here in our own ears with such unshrinking fidelity the story of the "Four Georges," "O comrades, enemies no more, let us clasp a mournful hand as we stand by this royal corpse and call a truce to battle. Low he lies to whom the proudest used once to kneel, and who was cast lower than the poorest. Dead—whom millions prayed for in vain! Driven off his throne, buffeted by rude hands, his children in revolt, the darling of his age, his Cordelia, killed untimely before him. Hush, strife and quarrel, over the solemn grave! Sound, trumpets, a mournful march! Fall, dark curtain, upon his pageant, his pride, his grief, his awful tragedy!"

Even down to the Declaration of Independence, through all the agitations, alarms and bloodshedding

[1] Campbell's *Lives of the Lord Chancellors*, vii, 182, American edition.

of the opening scenes of the great drama, and while engaged in deadly opposition to the British Parliament, the Presbyterian clergy continued to pray for the king and royal family. The explanation of this seeming anomaly is found in the very diverse views of constitutional allegiance entertained by the Americans toward the two parts of the British government. Not merely did they labor under the somewhat mistaken impression that George the Third was kindly disposed toward them, and was dragged reluctantly by popular enthusiasm into sanctioning the abitrary measures against their liberties, but they also made a wide difference between the claims which the king and the Parliament had on their allegiance. The colonists had always insisted on the right of regulating their own affairs for themselves, of voting their own taxes, salarying their own judges, raising and officering their own troops. The colonial legislatures were in their view coördinate Parliaments. They uniformly denied that the imperial Parliament had any right to make laws for them while they were unrepresented in it. As against the British *people*, therefore, they had no declaration of independence to make. It was as absurd, they held, for the burgesses and knights of the English shires to vote taxes on the colonists as it would be for the colonists to reverse the process. The people of England were not their masters.

They were self-governing by their own charters under the British constitution. The single point of union between them and the English people was allegiance in common to the same sovereign.

The great and difficult step to be taken, therefore, by the colonists, in 1776, was to cast off their allegiance to the throne. It was against the king that the impeachments of the Declaration were addressed, and not against the Parliament. It was the long series of acts, so impressively recited in the preamble of that great instrument as implying every attribute that can define a tyrant, which forced the long-hesitating and reluctant provincials at length to sever the last tie which bound them to the British government.

It was with no insincerity, therefore, that the Presbyterian clergy, for more than a year after we were actually at war with Great Britain, continued to pray for "our sovereign and rightful lord, King George." They owned him as their legitimate prince, though they denied that the Parliament was their master. No doubt, also, the simple, domestic and religious character of the king and the various stories told of his kindly, frugal life had greatly endeared him to the colonists, with whom such virtues were prized at their full value. The last sound of prayer for George the Third died out of Presbyterian pulpits in the month of June, 1776, and in its stead

came a new collect, *sine monitore, quia de pectore*, for "the Congress of these United States and for His Excellency the commander in chief of the American armies."

It was just at this time that there swam into the ken of a distinguished British watcher of the skies a new planet, which, with perhaps a pardonable loyalty, he called the Georgium Sidus. Astronomy herself, who seldom stoops to flatter kings, has since called it after the name of the finder, "Herschel," or, more commonly, Uranus. The tidings of the discovery came to us through the French savans; and the data were so complete that our own Rittenhouse—himself, I may add, a devout Presbyterian—was able at the first sweep to fix his glass upon that outlying member of our solar system.

We have quite recently been informed, also from France, of the discovery of another planet of a certain magnitude, with so many hours and minutes right ascension, so much south declination, and some three degrees, perhaps, of daily motion north.[1] The Georgium Sidus, though certainly a star of the first political magnitude, had unfortunately so little right ascension in this continent and so many degrees of northern motion that it soon set

[1] Communicated by Professor Henry of the Smithsonian Institution to the *New York Tribune* in May, 1876.

in clouds beyond the lakes, and was never able afterwards to send its rays south of the St. Lawrence.

That increased fervor and importunity was given to the prayers which now went up for all those in authority might reasonably be presumed, and is illustrated by well-known facts. There had been for some time maintained in the city of New York by the Presbyterian and other clergy a weekly ministers' meeting for devotion and mutual improvement. Eminent among this band of Christ's servants was Dr. John Rodgers, previously of St. George's parish, Delaware, subsequently the first moderator of the General Assembly. He was an eloquent preacher, a firm and unwavering patriot, the friend and counselor of George Washington. No sooner had the clock struck the fated hour of liberty than on his motion the meeting was resolved into a concert of prayer for God's blessing upon the Revolutionary struggle, and was regularly attended as such until the British troops took possession of the city. The same sentiment pervaded our entire Church. From every Presbyterian pulpit in the land, from every Presbyterian hearth, went up the unceasing voice of intercession for the suffering country.

But the Presbyterian clergy of the period by no means confined themselves to the duty of prayer for the cause of freedom. In the fluctuations of the

war our own churches, like others, were frequently laid waste. They were burned by accident or design. They were occupied by the British troops for riding schools, hospitals, jails or barracks. The congregations were dispersed or consisted only of non-combatants. The young, the middle-aged, in many cases the hale old men, were following after Washington, in those brave marches amid the sands of New Jersey, over the rocks and snows of Pennsylvania, till they stood at length—all that was left of them—in the trenches about Yorktown. The displaced pastors in many cases went with their people to the field. They served as army chaplains. They shouldered the musket or bore the spontoon in the actual shock of battle. Of more than one of them it may be said, as of Ulric Zwingle, *Pro Christo et pro patria etiam cum fratribus, fortiter pugnans, immortalitis certus, occidit.*

The records of the synod mention the death of the Rev. James Caldwell, whose sufferings and death make one of the darker scenes in the drama of the Revolution, and of the Rev. John Rosburgh, of Allentown, New Jersey, who "was barbarously murdered by the enemy at Trenton on the 2d of January, 1777."[1]

[1] *Minutes of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia under May* 21, 1777. This cruel act was not committed by the Hessians, as commonly stated, but by a party of British dragoons.

It was by such experiences as these for our Church and our country that we came *per ardua ad astra—through the stripes to the stars.*

The elders of our Church were equally forward in the cause of freedom—so much so, indeed, that if we should judge from numerous facts we might almost conclude that our entire eldership during that period was divided into *teaching elders* and *fighting elders.* A highly significant illustration of this is the fact that the five officers who commanded regiments or parts of regiments at the severe fight of King's Mountain, Colonels Williams, Shelby, Campbell, Sevier and Cleveland, were every one elders of Presbyterian churches.[1]

The part played in the course of this struggle by Dr. JOHN WITHERSPOON has been so much the theme of remark throughout these Centennial services that it is something more than superfluous to go into any detailed account of him. Yet a sketch of this kind would be too defective if he were wholly left out. He came to America in 1768, an adult and thoroughbred Scotchman, in consequence of his election to the presidency of the College of New Jersey. He had already been distinguished as a vigorous polemic, a keen satirist, a staunch though not always prudent defender of evangelical religion and Christian morality. His *Ecclesiastical Charac-*

[1] Smyth's *Eccles. Republicanism*, p. 145.

teristics, dealing as it does in sarcasm, irony and personal caricature, is among the more doubtful methods by which a good cause may be defended. It was an anonymous exposure of the theological system and moral and religious character of the *low and slow* "moderates" of the Church of Scotland.

The work fell like a bombshell into the camp of the philosophizing, theater-going, semi-deistical clergy, the friends of Hume, Lord Kames and Robert Burns. An outbreak of wrath followed. Dr. Witherspoon was a member of the Presbytery of Irvine, and had just been "presented" to the living of Paisley. The Presbytery of Paisley took up the book, pronounced it false and libelous, and lodged a complaint of it and its reputed author before the Synod of Glasgow. Dr. Witherspoon defended himself in a firm and ingenious speech, challenging the proof of his authorship of the offensive publication and charging the Presbytery of Paisley with a gratuitous and unauthorized attempt to destroy him indirectly, instead of coming manfully forward and tabling charges against him.

The result was his acquittal and triumph. But he fared less successfully in a subsequent collision with the civil courts. He was indicted for attacking certain persons by name from the pulpit, found guilty of libel and sentenced to the payment of a

considerable fine. In his defense before the Synod of Glasgow, Dr. Witherspoon had observed that if he had spoken of the Scottish Kirk with half the severity that many English writers had employed toward their own clergy "he should need to keep a ship always ready to flee to another country." The ship arrived now just at the critical moment, bringing to Dr. Witherspoon an invitation to accept the presidency of the College of New Jersey. He embarked and sailed away, leaving his sureties to settle as they could with the justices of the quorum.[1]

The *Ecclesiastical Characteristics* made an impression by its severity and personality much beyond what can be explained to the modern reader by its literary merits. The irony is too broad and coarse, and leaves the reader too little opportunity for the exercise of his own penetration in discovering the application. Another essay of the author's, an allegorical history of the Christian Church, and particularly of the Church of Scotland, under the figure of a "corporation of servants," is both far wittier than the *Characteristics* and much freer from objectionable personalities.

In all Dr. Witherspoon's miscellaneous writings the influence of his familiarity with the writings of

[1] Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit*, article JOHN WITHERSPOON.

Dean Swift is very observable. The treatise last named is evidently modeled on the *History of John Bull*, and while wanting in the grotesque humor of Swift's dialogue carries out the allegory with almost as grave and consistent an irony. With far less genius than the dean of St. Patrick's, he had the same literary audacity, the same plain, nervous English style, the same passion for dabbling in politics, and perhaps a little too much of the same willingness to indulge in coarse jests and allusions.

John Witherspoon was as true a type of the average Scotch Presbyterian mind as John Knox himself, from whom he is said to have descended. Hard, resolute, pugnacious, his mission was to fight the battles of religious liberty under what standard soever; and it may be regarded as probable enough that had he come to America at an earlier age he would have been as ready to draw the sword as to wield the pen in the cause of independence. While quite a youth his tastes led him to look on at the field of Falkirk, where the Highlanders of Charles Edward routed the royal army, and where, though a non-combatant, he remained a prisoner in the hands of the rebels. The bright blossoming of his piety and culture was guarded by the spines of a high temper and a formidable logic. He bore on his very front the legend of his country's thistle, *Nemo me impune lacessit.*

Such a man, though but a recent immigrant, was as valuable as he was a ready champion of the rights of the colonies. His sentiments rapidly grew up to the height of those of the most advanced patriots. In his letter "On conducting the American Controversy" and his "Thoughts on American Liberty," while continuing to profess affection and loyalty to the British throne, he exposed with great clearness the actual situation of affairs and sketched with the hand of a statesman the steps the colonies should pursue for the vindication of their rights. In the pulpit he was equally outspoken. On the 17th of May, 1776, appointed by Congress as a day of fasting and prayer, he preached a sermon (afterwards published with a dedication to John Hancock) on the text, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." The theme was "God's dominion over the passions of men," and was drawn out into the proposition that "the ambition of mistaken princes, the cunning and cruelty of oppressive and corrupt ministers, and even the inhumanity of brutal soldiers, shall finally promote the glory of God; and in the meantime, while the storm continues, his mercy and kindness shall appear in prescribing bounds to their rage and fury."

In the course of this sermon Dr. Witherspoon said: "You shall not, my brethren, hear from me

in the pulpit what you have never heard from me in conversation: I mean railing at the king personally, or even his ministers and Parliament and the people of Britain as so many barbarous savages. Many of their actions have been worse than their intentions. That they should desire unlimited dominion if they can obtain or preserve it is neither new nor wonderful. I do not refuse submission to their unjust claims because they themselves are corrupt or profligate, though many of them probably are so, but because they are *men*, and therefore liable to all the selfish bias inseparable from human nature. I call this claim unjust of making laws to bind us in all cases whatsoever, because they are widely separated from us, are independent of us and have an interest in oppressing us. This is the true and proper hinge of the controversy between Great Britain and the colonies."

A few days after this sermon was preached Dr. Witherspoon became a member of the provincial Congress of New Jersey, and on the 22d of June was chosen one of the representatives to the general Congress. Only four days elapsed between his taking his seat in this august body and the 2d of July, when the declaration was adopted. He had not heard the debates; and though his own mind was irrevocably made up and he came, indeed, under instructions to vote for independence, yet to satisfy

his own sense of self-respect he desired to hear the whole argument in the affirmative presented. To satisfy him and one or two others similarly situated this was agreed to; and, by the choice of his colleagues, Samuel Adams came forward and went over the whole ground.

Witherspoon no longer pretended any hesitation. He had not been willing to vote on so momentous a question without both hearing and giving reasons. He declared himself fully satisfied, and urged that the declaration should be passed without delay. He thought the country was ripe for it, and more than ripe: it was in danger of *spoiling* for the want of it. Besides this single dictum and the fragment of a speech traditionally imputed to him, we have no means of knowing what particular services he rendered the country on the floor of Congress; but his published "speeches" are a monument of his enthusiasm in the cause of liberty. In successive pamphlets he laid open before the world the causes and character of the war, warned the British people of the consequence of persisting in it, and in the name of his adopted countrymen avowed that they infinitely preferred extermination to the surrender of their liberties. From this high flame of heroic argument he could descend to pillory a renegade parson or lampoon a tory printer. James Rivington, besides his other claims to notoriety, had "the

fame to be lashed by his pen." In the cause of independence he fought with "what trivial weapon came to hand." *Libertati* (for liberty, he thought, as well as for necessity) *quodlibet telum utile.* For some enemies of freedom he scorned a sword. It was honor enough if he mauled them with a bludgeon or even defiled their faces with dirt. His sun both rose and set partly in clouds; but its middle course at least was resplendent with the light of heroism as a patriot, zeal and success as an educator of youth and faithful testimony as a preacher of the gospel.

The formal histories of our Church relate how many others of our clergy helped on the struggle for independence by brave words and brave deeds, by valiant service in the field or wise counsel in the senate. The whole weight of the only body of clergy and churches which, out of New England, enjoyed any appreciable prestige or influence, went undivided in aid of the cause of liberty. The schism in the Presbyterian body had been happily healed seventeen years before. The Church was absolutely harmonious and at peace within herself, and acted as a unit in the struggle. There were a few instances, like the famous and witty Mather Byles, of Congregationalist tories, not one of a Presbyterian. The social status, the education and culture, the eloquence, the faith, the prayers of our Church

fathers were enlisted on the side of independence; so that, as that staunch friend of the colonies, Horace Walpole, said: "There was no good in crying about the matter. Cousin America had run off with a Presbyterian parson, and that was the end of it."[1]

It is a circumstance of interest connected with this history that our struggle with Great Britain had nothing whatever of the character of a religious war. When, twenty years earlier, the provincials fought by the side of the British regulars for the mastery of the continent, it was against aliens and papists, with a legitimate horror of wooden shoes, frogs and the whore of Babylon. "Virginians, Britons, Christians, Protestants!" exclaimed Samuel Davies in 1756, "if you would save yourselves and your families from all the infernal horrors of popery, if you would preserve your estates from falling a prey to priests, friars and hungry Gallic slaves,

[1] Letter to the Countess of Ossory, August 3, 1775.

He was never tired of launching his indignant witticisms at the parliament and the conduct of the war. "The Americans, at least, have acted like men. Our conduct has been that of pert children: we have thrown a pebble at a mastiff, and are surprised it was not frightened."—December 15, 1774. "A great majority in both houses is as brave as a mob ducking a pickpocket. They flattered themselves they should terrify the colonies into submission in three months, and are amazed to hear there is no such probability. They might as well have excommunicated them and left the devil to put the sentence in execution."—February 18, 1775.

if you would preserve the pure religion of Jesus from superstition, idolatry and tyranny over the conscience, strike home in such a cause!"

But here we were arrayed against our brethren of the same Anglo-Saxon race, speaking the same "dear English tongue," and professing the same evangelical faith of the Reformation. Even those unfortunate Hessians, who were sold by the greed of their prince to kill and be killed in battles in the result of which they had no interest, were our fellow-Protestants and, I may say with a little allowance, our fellow-Presbyterians, formidable to our grandmothers by their outlandish speech and their bearskin caps much more than to our grandsires by any forward or ferocious valor in the field. They were the subjects of Frederic II of Hesse-Cassel, himself a pervert to Romanism, while the great majority of his people were of the Reformed or the Lutheran confessions. It is pathetic to be told that when nine hundred of these poor "driven cattle" laid down their arms at Trenton, and were formed into columns to be marched off to their prisoners' quarters, they lifted up their sad voices in the old familiar strains of a Vaterland's hymn, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" or some other. Their own "wehr und waffen" had proved, indeed, but a poor reliance in their ignorant struggle against liberty. But God was their refuge and their

strength, a very present help in trouble. The war was neither carried on, therefore, with that ferocity which characterizes religious wars, nor did it leave legacies of unsatisfied vengeance behind. Many of the Hessians remained as voluntary settlers when the royal armies finally withdrew, and became a valuable element in the composition of American society.

If we examine the records of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia during the war, we find frequent evidence of the intense interest with which the struggle was viewed and the hearty patriotism of the Presbyterian clergy. In the pastoral letter already referred to, issued to the churches the 22d of May, 1774, the synod urges: "Be careful to maintain the union that at present subsists through all the colonies. In particular, as the Continental Congress now sitting in Philadelphia consists of delegates chosen in the most free and unbiased manner by the body of the people, let them not only be treated with respect and encouraged in their difficult service, not only let your prayers be offered up to God for his direction in their proceedings, but adhere firmly to their resolutions, and let it be seen that they are able to bring out the whole strength of this vast country to carry them into execution."

Repeatedly the synod appointed days of fasting and humiliation in view of those sins which had brought down the "just judgment" of God in so destructive a war upon the colonists; and they made the last Thursday of each month "a monthly concert of prayer" for its early and successful termination. They felt no difficulty, as devout students of God's word and providence, in reconciling the unjust and wicked character of the war on the part of Great Britain with its righteousness as a part of the divine administration toward an ill-deserving generation. As subjects, indeed, they were the victims of oppression and misgovernment; but as sinners, they laid their hand upon their mouth and acknowledged that they received no more than the colonial iniquity deserved.

In 1779 the synod, "taking into consideration the great and increasing decay of vital piety, the degeneracy of manners, want of public spirit, and prevalence of vice and immorality that obtains throughout our land, and that the righteous God, by continuing still to afflict us with the sore calamity of a cruel and barbarous war, is loudly calling the inhabitants to repentance and reformation, and as a means thereto to deep humiliation and frequent and fervent prayer," appointed the 17th of August to be observed for that purpose, and renewed the recommendation for the patriotic monthly concert.

Identically the same action, in the same words, seems to have been taken by the synod the year following, and the same month and day fixed upon for public humiliation and prayer. In 1777 the Continental Congress having appointed a general fast to be kept on the 17th of May, the moderator, by his own authority, postponed the meeting of synod till after that day; which was allowed to pass *pro hac vice* under protest. Louis XVI, whose throne was already beginning to totter, had become our ally; and on the 17th of May, 1782, the synod appointed a committee, of which Dr. John Witherspoon was chairman, to prepare an address to the French minister, congratulating him on the birth of a Dauphin, "son and heir to the crown of his royal master;" that unhappy "Bourbon" who died in the prison of the temple, but whom it is still believed by some we had "among us" disguised under the alias of Eleazar Williams, and in the shape of an Episcopal missionary to the St. Regis Indians.

III

STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

THE Presbyterian Church came out of the war whose success she had done so much to ensure, depleted indeed in her churches, many of which had

been destroyed, and in her membership, which had left large contingents on every battle field of the war, but with her organization intact, her machinery all in working order, and with a vigorous salient life that fitted her for an immediate career of growth and influence. That she stood far in advance of any other denomination in the land cannot be doubted. During all the preceding eight years of distraction and suffering, her ministry had steadily increased. The work of home evangelization had been systematically prosecuted. Pastors were detailed by order of the synod to supply occasional services to vacant congregations. Books of "practical religion" were purchased "for distribution among the frontier inhabitants;" missionaries were dispatched to plant and nurse churches in the feebler colonies; chaplains were commissioned for the army; frequent cases of licensure and installation occurred; the work of discipline was faithfully attended to. The Indian fund, the widows' fund, the fund "for the education of poor and pious young men for the ministry,"—all these were carefully administered. In every month of May during the war the synod held its regular "sederunt"; though the disturbed state of the country often prevented whole presbyteries from attending. Day after day during the sessions the quaint record informs us that "the synod met according to adjournment, *ubi post preces*

sederunt qui supra;" an expansion of the cabalistic letters U. P. P. S. Q. S. found in the earlier minutes.

Particularly deserving of mention is the wise and firm policy of the synod in respect to the qualifications of candidates for the ministry. The urgent need of ministers in various parts of the country led to the natural suggestion, so often renewed in later times, that young men of suitable gifts and piety might be introduced to the ministry after only brief intellectual discipline. Such an overture was made to the synod in 1776 by the Presbytery of New Castle. The synod replied that "the superior advantages attending an education in public seminaries render it highly expedient to encourage the young men to finish their academical studies in such institutions, as means of securing a learned ministry; and presbyteries are ordered to promote this end by warmly recommending it to those who have the ministry in view. Yet as presbyteries are the proper judges to determine concerning the literary and other requisite qualifications for the ministerial office, it is not intended to preclude from admission to trial those who have not had the opportunity of obtaining public testimonials or degrees from public seminaries."

To the same effect was a brief and positive deliverance of the synod in 1785. "An overture hav-

ing been brought in in the following terms, viz., 'Whether, in the present state of the Church in America and the scarcity of ministers to fill our numerous congregations, the synod or presbyteries ought therefore to relax in any degree in the literary qualifications required of intrants into the ministry,' it was carried in the negative by a great majority."

This was in noble harmony with the doctrine of the Kirk of Scotland as set forth in the first Book of Discipline. "Neither for rarity of men, necessity of teaching, nor for any corruption of time, should unable persons be admitted to the ministry. Better it is to have the room vacant than to have unqualified persons, to the scandal of the ministry and hurt of the Kirk. In the rarity of qualified men we should call unto the Lord, that he of his goodness would send forth true laborers to his harvest."

The Presbyterian Church in America thus maintained her hereditary character for a thoroughly trained and cultured ministry. Her clergy at the close of the war were few in number, not exceeding probably one hundred and fifty; but they were men who had borne the test of fire; the peers for talent and accomplishment of the foremost in the State. They wore the prestige of a suffering and triumphant martyr-Church, fully identified with the spirit of the country. If any sect of Christians

in the newly-founded republic could reasonably have claimed special favors from the State it was the Church of Rodgers and Caldwell, of Davies and Witherspoon, of Stanhope, of the Alisons and Blair Smiths, and the others whose conspicuous zeal had given the war the popular character of a "Presbyterian rebellion"; men whose lives had proclaimed before England and the world,

> "We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
> That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
> Which Milton held. In everything we are sprung
> Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold."[1]

It is not strange that other sects, conscious of this fact, looked upon her with some jealousy and alarm. Not the slightest effort did our fathers make to avail themselves of these advantages. They desired nothing but equal rights *for* all and *with* all Christians. In 1781 and again in 1783 they adopted this declaration: "It having been represented to synod that the Presbyterian Church suffers in the opinion of other denominations from an apprehension that they hold intolerant principles, the synod do solemnly and publicly declare that they ever have and still do renounce and abhor the principles of intolerance, and we do believe that all peaceable members of civil society ought to be protected in the full and free exercise of their religion."

[1] Wordsworth, sonnets dedicated to Liberty, I, xv.

These just as well as generous sentiments were by no means universally entertained at that time. No sooner did the sun of peace illumine the land than Episcopacy, which had wholly disappeared from view, came forth again and with a singular lack both of modesty and justice endeavored to reclaim its lapsed colonial prerogatives. Our Church fathers were obliged to engage in a new struggle for religious equality.

This struggle took place chiefly on the soil of Virginia, in which, as already observed, Episcopacy had been most thoroughly established. On the 5th December, 1776, after a debate lasting for two months, in which Thomas Jefferson and other great men of the Old Dominion took part, the assembly of the State, *against the remonstrances of the Episcopalians and Methodists*, repealed all laws either requiring attendance on Episcopal services or levying taxes for the support of Episcopal worship; but all churches, chapels, parsonages, glebe lands, etc., originally the property of a people full two-thirds of whom belonged to other denominations, were still left to the Episcopal Church. This was only an imperfect disestablishment, and the adherents of that Church by no means relinquished the hope of regaining the exclusive privileges they had lost.

Strong demonstrations were made toward sup-

pressing "unlicensed preachers," punishing the irregularities of "*sectarian*" worship, and confirming the Episcopal Church in the unequal privileges it still retained.

That great patriot and broad Christian, Patrick Henry, brought forward in the Virginia legislature a bill for the incorporation of all Christian societies and the support of public worship by general tax. The splendid eloquence and immense popularity of the author gave dangerous advantages to the measure, and he urged it for two or more sessions with characteristic vehemence. The resistance to this bill—a bill which embodied in fact or in clear prospective all the evils of a union of Church and State—was led by the Presbytery of Hanover in Virginia, and it here becomes proper to give a brief history of the origin of that presbytery.

Previous to the year 1740 there was but a single Presbyterian Church, so far as is known, in Eastern Virginia. The few who were not Episcopalians were Baptists or Quakers. In that year there was living in Hanover County (a district made famous as the birthplace of Patrick Henry and Henry Clay, and "blazed broader yet in after years" as the scene of some of the fellest conflicts of the civil war) a well-to-do planter named Samuel Morris. He by no means belonged to the upper class of Virginia society, but was a plain man, working with his

own hands, and, according to a manuscript statement, joined the business of a mason to that of a planter. His soul had famished under the ministrations of the fox-hunting, tavern-haunting parish clergy. But the Spirit of God had touched his heart, and the providence of God strangely brought the truth of the gospel within his grasp. Reaching blindly in the dark for some one to guide him in the way of life, he met the hand of Luther stretched out across two centuries, and bearing the commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, that most individual and subjective of all commentaries, "wherein is set forth most excellently (as the title page reads) the glorious riches of God's grace, and the power of the gospel, to the joyful comfort and confirmation of all such as do hunger and thirst for justification in Christ Jesus." Full as it is of Christ, and of redemption through his blood alone, it would scarcely now be considered the fittest work to present to an inquiring soul. But in Hanover County books were few and scarce then; and of the dilute, sugared and illustrated books containing salvation made easy, there were none. The awakened mind of the tobacco-planter grappled with the strong, vigorous exhibitions of gospel grace contained in the commentary on what Luther fondly called *his* epistle, and was led by it to a clear and solid peace in believing. He hardly thought or

knew that he was a converted man; but he felt the love of Christ in his heart, and that love constrained him to try and do good to the souls of his neighbors. He invited them to come to his house on Sundays and hear him read passages from a book which had exerted so marked an influence on his own feelings. They attended, and he read to them chapter after chapter of the Bible and Luther on the Galatians.

That was all, absolutely. They knew nothing about extemporary prayer, and none of them durst attempt it. They had neither books nor culture for devotional singing.

Dull service, we might think, to bring together the people of a county! But such a famine of the word had been bred by the "Honeymans," the "Hagans," and "Sampsons," who had been sent over to evangelize the "Virginians"—so hungry were the people for the bread of life—that to enjoy this meager worship they came trooping from a circuit of twenty, thirty or fifty miles. The gentleman planter rode out through his long avenue, with his wife *en croupe* or ambling on her palfrey beside him; the humbler farmer drove along his mule team or his ox cart loaded with his family; from the rude shanty and from the old English-like manor house on the banks of the Pamunkey or the Chickahominy came the eager throng; and on the outside

hung a dusky fringe from the "quarter," to catch what they could of that free gospel which proclaims liberty to the captive and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound.

The meetings increased in interest, and conversions began to follow. The planter's house became too small for the congregation. Mr. Morris and some of his neighbors agreed to club together and put up a building—they had no thought of calling it a church—to accommodate the worshipers. It was known as MORRIS' READING-HOUSE. The attraction of this service was such that other neighborhoods desired to enjoy the same privilege. Mr. Morris became a lay reader at several different and distant stations; and the inquiry began to grow into a general awakening.

In 1743 an improvement of the spiritual fare came in the shape of Whitefield's *Sermons*, then lately published, a copy of which was sent over from Scotland, and presented by the owner to Mr. Morris. The parish churches were neglected, and the people thronged to hear the simple story of the cross recited by these unauthorized lips.

The clergy took the alarm and called on the courts to visit the offenders with the prescribed penalties for absence from public worship. Mr. Morris and his friends were summoned before the justices, interrogated and fined; he himself twenty

different times. The laws of Virginia frowned as sternly on all *religiones illicitas* as did the laws of the twelve tables. To secure any toleration a worship must be at least that of some "national religion."[1]

The dissentients were summoned to declare what denomination of Christians they belonged to. The question puzzled them not a little. They knew nothing of any sect besides the Quakers, and they were certainly not Quakers. They asked leave to consult together before replying to His Honor's inquiry. What they knew of gospel truth they had learned mostly from Martin Luther. The vanity of all outward services and formal rituals when the troubled conscience is crying out for peace, and the solid ground of hope presented in free justification through the grace that is in Christ Jesus, commended itself to their own experience. They came into court and answered that "they were Lutherans." Lutheranism was a national religion, and though the respondents only meant that they agreed with Luther in his views of the gospel, they escaped under this cover the punishment denounced against "sectarians."

[1] On the subject of Samuel Morris and the Presbyterians in Virginia, see Foote's *Sketches of Presbyterian Churches*, p. 119; Dr. Miller's *Memoir of Dr. John Rodgers*, p. 27, sqq.; Dr. Rice's *History*, p. 113, 186, 330, sqq.; Bishop Meade's *Old Churches and Families of Virginia*, vol. i, p. 426.

Two English statutes respecting religious worship bore, or were alleged to bear, on the condition of the "Dissenters" in America. One was the Act of Uniformity of Queen Elizabeth, as further modified and extended in the reign of James I and Charles II, making all dissent from the worship of the Established Church penal. The other was the Toleration Act of the Revolution government of 1688, which made cautious provision for the relief of dissenters. It did not, in terms, apply to the colonies. Indeed the specific mention of "England, Scotland, Ireland, Berwick-upon-Tweed and the islands of Jersey and Guernsey" as the scope of its operation might seem to exclude them; and the king's attorneys in Virginia always denied the right of the Presbyterians to avail themselves of its protection. It was at best a meager and ungracious concession, and left the freedom of worship hampered with vexatious conditions.[1]

In the varying and unsettled state of judicial decisions on this point, colonial dissenting preachers were treated with more or less rigor according to the tempers of royal governors or county justices; sometimes indulged on clearing themselves by oath of all suspicion of Unitarianism, popery or jacobitism; sometimes fined and driven out of the country.

While Mr. Morris and his friends were passing

[1] See the act in *Neal's History of the Puritans*, Appendix XIII.

through this ordeal it happened that the Rev. William Robinson came, preaching as an evangelist, into the Valley of Virginia. He was the son of a wealthy English Quaker, but himself a Presbyterian, a member of the Presbytery of New Brunswick and a zealous, rousing preacher of the gospel.[1] He was heard on some occasion by persons who had been accustomed to attend on the reading services of Mr. Morris. The latter was informed of this new evangelist and of the harmony of his doctrines with those of Luther and Whitefield. The result was an invitation to Mr. Robinson to preach on a set day in Morris' Reading-House.

Notice was widely given and great crowds came together at the appointed time. But highly recommended as Mr. Robinson was for his evangelic zeal and faithfulness, these simple souls were jealous for the purity of the gospel. While the congregation waited they took the evangelist aside and put him through a course of thorough examination on the leading doctrines. The result was satisfactory, and Mr. Robinson preached on that and several following days with great acceptance and a manifest blessing. They found themselves in perfect accord and sympathy with him. After a while it occurred to them somehow to ask him to what denomination of Christians he belonged. He said he was a Pres-

[1] *Annals of the American Pulpit*, iii, 92.

byterian. They then said that they believed they were Presbyterians too.[1]

This was the germ of that strong vigorous Presbyterian Christianity which filled up and overflowed from that district, and of which the Presbytery of Hanover was the first organized representative. Mr. Robinson's preaching made a profound impression. The people wished to express their gratitude by presenting him a considerable sum of money. He declined to receive it. They urged it upon him, but still he refused. They then placed it secretly in his saddlebags the evening before he was to leave. Detecting the kindly fraud, he no longer resisted, but informed the donors that he would appropriate the money to the use of a young man of his acquaintance who was studying for the ministry under embarrassed circumstances. "As soon as he is licensed," said Mr. Robinson, "we will send him to visit you. It may be that you are now by your liberality providing a minister for yourselves."

They little knew the splendid result to which they were contributing, for that poor young man was Samuel Davies, the alpha in that southern cross of flaming evangelists who poured the light of the gospel on the "Ancient Dominion." Feeble in

[1] It is not pretended in this brief historical sketch to give all the particulars, but merely to seize on the more salient points of the story.

health and with the prospect, too surely realized, of an early death, he preached literally as a dying man to dying hearers. A more burning zeal, a more intense devotion to the work of saving men, a more heroic fidelity to truth and duty has never signalized the American pulpit. Four years after the events just related, in company with his intimate and equally distinguished friend, John Rodgers, he made his way to Hanover County, where he entered into and superseded the work of the friends who had helped in his education. It was only after an energetic struggle that he succeeded in vindicating his right to preach the gospel in Virginia, while his associate, notwithstanding the friendly disposition of Governor Gooch, was rudely refused a license and driven out of the colony.[1]

[1] Soon after Mr. Rodgers reached Williamsburg, one of the Established clergy of Hanover, who had followed him, appeared before Sir William Gooch and complained that this young gentleman before going to Williamsburg had preached one sermon in Hanover contrary to law, urging Sir William to proceed against him with rigor. Sir William's reply did equal honor to his religious sentiments and his official liberality: "Mr. ——, I am surprised at you. You profess to be a minister of Jesus Christ, and you come to me to complain of a man and wish me to punish him for preaching the gospel! For shame, sir! Go home and mind your own duty. For such a piece of conduct you deserve to have your gown stript over your shoulders."—Dr. Miller's *Life of Dr. John Rodgers*, p. 54.

See the noble vindication of himself by Mr. Davies, addressed under date 11th May, 1751, to the Bishop of London, in the *Princeton Repertory* for 1840.

Throughout this region Samuel Davies continued to preach with apostolic zeal, wearing out his frail body by extraordinary fatigues and exposures, till called for the short remainder of his brilliant career to succeed Jonathan Edwards in the presidency of the College of New Jersey.[1]

Other Presbyterian missionaries followed Mr. Robinson into Virginia. Congregations were gathered and churches organized; and on the 3d of October, 1755, the Synod of New York, reaching

[1] The just and elegant inscription on his tombstone in the Princeton cemetery, perhaps from the classical pen of Samuel Finley, who succeeded him so soon in the presidency and was so soon laid beside him in the grave, is as follows:—

"Sub hoc marmore sepulchrali, mortales exuviæ reverendi perquam viri Samuel Davies, A. M., collegii nov cæsariensis præsidis, futurum Domini adventum præstolantur. Ne te, viator, ut pauca de tanto tamque dilecto viro resciscas, paulisper morari pigeat. Natus est in comitatu de New Castle juxta Delaware 3 Novembris, anno salutis reparatæ, 1724. S. N. Sacris ibidem initiatus, 19 Februarii, 1747, tutelam pastoralem ecclesiæ in comitatu de Hanover Virginiensium suscepit. Ibi per 11 plus minus annos ministri evangelici laboribus indefesse et favente numine auspicato perfunctus, ad munus præsidiale collegii nov cæsariensis gerendum vocatus est, et inauguratus, 26 Julii, 1759, S. N. Sed, proh rerum inane, intra biennium febre correptus, candidam animam cœlo redidit, 4 Februarii, 1761. Heu! quam exiguum vitæ curriculum! Corpore fuit eximis; gestu liberali, placido, augusto. Ingenii nitore, morum integritate, munificentia, facilitate, inter paocus illustris.

Rei literariæ peritus; theologus promptust, perspicax. In rostris, per eloquium blandum, mellitum, vehemens simul et perstringens, nulli secundus. Scriptor ornatus, sublimis, disertus. Præsertim viro pietate ardente in Deum zelo et religione spectandus."—Alden's *American Epitaphs*, Pentade I, vol. i, Art. 155.

over into Virginia, ordered the erection of a new presbytery by the name of the Presbytery of Hanover. The original members were the Rev. Samuel Davies, John Todd, Alexander Craighead, Robert Henry, John Wright and John Brown. The first meeting was appointed to be held in Hanover, and opened with a sermon by Mr. Davies.

This was the presbytery that now came forward to maintain against the eloquence of Patrick Henry and the zeal of Peyton Randolph the imperiled cause of religious liberty. In the most energetic terms they rejected for themselves, and reprobated for all others, any share in the proceeds of so ill-omened and illegitimate a partnership. They drew with a firm hand the line of demarkation between the functions of the Church and the State; showed the uselessness as well as the danger of attempting to support public worship by compulsory taxation; and insisted that any such measure was but the beginning of a usurpation, the end of which no man could determine. "These consequences," they said in conclusion, "are so plain as not to be denied; and they are so entirely subversive of religious liberty, that if they should take place in Virginia we should be reduced to the melancholy necessity of saying with the apostles in like cases, 'Judge ye whether it is best to obey God or men,' and also of acting as they acted."

"Therefore, as it is contrary to our principles and interest, and as we think subversive of religious liberty, we do again most earnestly entreat that our legislature would never extend any assessment for religious purposes to us or to the congregations under our care."

This vigorous protest decided the question for the time, and on the third reading the bill was rejected.

One other brief struggle remained. The idea of the necessity of a union of Church and State in some form had been so wrought into the Virginia mind, and the members of the old dominant Church reconciled themselves with so much difficulty to a simple equality with other sects, that on the conclusion of peace they came forward with a new attempt to recover their lost prerogatives. The project for a general assessment for religious purposes was revived, and a bill was introduced in the legislature for securing to the Episcopal Church all the property, glebe lands, etc., it had received from the State before the Revolution. This involved the rebuilding by public tax of all decayed or destroyed parish churches, the restoration of all sequestered church effects, and possibly also the payment of all arrears of clerical salaries.

The legislature of Virginia was, to a considerable extent, a system of pocket boroughs. The old

hereditary legislators, the Nicholases, Randolphs, Lees, Pendletons, etc., had all been connected with the Established Church. They received the bill with great favor, and there was danger of its being rushed through in advance of any resistance. But the ever-vigilant Presbytery of Hanover again came to the front and threw themselves into the breach. They had grown into veterans in the service of religious liberty, and shrunk from no conflict. A prompt, decided remonstrance from them brought the legislature to a pause.

The Presbyterian clergy seized the opportunity to act in mass. They came together in convention, adopted a new memorial and sent Dr. John Blair Smith, one of the most honored names in the history of the Church, to lay it before the House of Delegates. His argument of three days' duration settled the question finally and forever. The bill was dropped, never to be revived.

This sounded the death knell of all Church establishment in America. Other States followed or walked *pari passu* with Virginia in the work of reform. With comparatively little resistance the union of Church and State was swept from the statute books of Delaware and Maryland, of New York, of North and South Carolina and Georgia; and religion, released from all trammels of human

imposition, walked free and majestic in our emancipated States.

I cannot but lament that the name of that heroic presbytery, which stood foremost in the battle by which this victory was won, has, for the present, disappeared from our roll. Well may we be proud of a church that walked upright and unfaltering in the path of freedom when Patrick Henry stumbled.

With this defensive victory the Presbytery of Hanover was content. The Episcopal Church indeed still retained a large amount of property, real and movable, which had been acquired by the proceeds of a general tax on all the inhabitants; particularly the glebe lands, of which most of the parishes in Virginia were possessed to the extent of not less than two hundred acres each. The first General Assembly of Virginia, after the adoption of the State Constitution in October, 1776, ordained "that there shall in all time coming be saved and reserved to the use of the Church by law established, the several tracts of glebe lands already purchased, the churches and chapels already built, and such as were begun or contracted for before the passing of the said act for the use of the parishes; all books, plate and ornaments belonging to or appropriated to the use of the said church, and all arrears of money or tobacco arising from former assessments or otherwise."

This act recognized the Episcopal Church as still "established by law," and preserved to it in perpetuity the ownership of the glebe lands and other church property possessed before the Revolution. Being simply an act of the legislature, it was of course liable to repeal by any subsequent assembly; and considering their previous experience, it is not strange that other denominations should view with jealousy the slightest appearance of any concession of peculiar advantages to the Episcopal Church.

But it was not the Presbyterians who came forward to prosecute the quarrel against her. It was another body of Christians, the Baptists, who in their previous unorganized condition had suffered even more than Presbyterians from the laws against sectarian and unlicensed worship, that now, in their hour of triumph, turned against their late persecutors.

It was the "Baptists and their abettors" who urged the resumption by the State of the Chuch lands. This object they prosecuted year after year with unabated determination, until, in 1801, success crowned their efforts and the glebes were publicly sold.

Dr. Baird maintains that this act of confiscation was unconstitutional. and adds that "the opposition to the Episcopal Church toward the end of the

century was marked by a cruelty which admits of no apology." [1]

Not throwing any doubt whatever on the correctness of these opinions, we may yet observe that none of the melancholy consequences apprehended by the Episcopal clergy followed this spoliation. The glebes had been of little or no value to them. They consisted often of wild and unproductive lands. The advantage of being relieved from the odium of depending in any way on State bounty greatly overbalanced the small material loss. The laity came up to the demands of the voluntary system and assumed, no doubt cheerfully, the support of their own clergy. The character of the latter underwent a great and beneficent revolution. Purified by trials and led (after 1827) by their excellent prelate, Bishop Meade, they took on that devout, exemplary, evangelical type which has always since characterized the Virginia clergy.

[1] Baird's *Religion in America*, I., iii; *Collections of the Protestant Episcopal Historical Society for* 1851, pp. 166–181.

The *Address of the Rector of Antrim Parish*, on the proposed sale of the glebes in Virginia, is a modest and pathetic document, and serves to show how sweet are the uses of adversity for churches as well as for individuals.

IV

INTERNAL VIEW OF THE CHURCH FROM THE CLOSE OF THE WAR TO THE ADOPTION OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION, 1783–1786

IT remains to add a brief outline of the history of the synod from the close of the war to the close of its own career as the chief court of the Presbyterian Church.

Articles of peace between Great Britain and her revolted colonies were signed at Paris, November 30, 1782. The war had virtually terminated a year before by the surrender at Yorktown of the last British army on the soil of America. The synod of 1783 met in the city of Philadelphia, undisturbed by any apprehensions of being abruptly adjourned to Bedminster or elsewhere by the approach of hostile forces. The attendance was small. The pastors were like men who had just escaped a great disaster, and were busied in gathering together their scattered effects and studying to repair the ruin. Money was wanting for the expenses of travel. The irredeemable paper currency had sunk to only a nominal value. It may be mentioned in illustration that the janitor who waited on the synod received for his services three dollars in specie, which seems to have been regarded as equivalent to two hundred

dollars continental currency, the amount that was paid the janitor the year previous.

The synod at once applied itself to the work of repairing the spiritual desolations caused by the war. They passed the emphatic disclaimer, already referred to, of any wish for advantages over their brethren of other denominations. They sent out to the churches a pastoral letter of congratulation and warning on the success of the American arms.

"We cannot help congratulating you," they say, "on the general and almost universal attachment of the Presbyterian body to the cause of liberty and the rights of mankind. This has been visible in their conduct, and has been confessed by the complaints and resentment of the common enemy. Such a circumstance ought not only to afford us satisfaction on the review, as bringing credit to the body in general, but to increase our gratitude to God for the happy issue of the war. Had it been unsuccessful, we must have drunk deeply of the cup of suffering. Our burnt and wasted churches, and our plundered dwellings, in such places as fell under the power of our adversaries, are but an earnest of what we must have suffered had they finally prevailed.

"The synod, therefore, request you to render thanks to Almighty God for all his mercies, spiritual and temporal, and in a particular manner for estab-

lishing the independence of the United States of America. He is the supreme Disposer, and to him belong the glory, the victory and the majesty. We are persuaded you will easily recollect many circumstances in the course of the struggle which point out his special and signal interposition in our favor. Our most remarkable successes have generally been when things had just before worn the most unfavorable aspect, as at Trenton and Saratoga at the beginning, in South Carolina and Virginia toward the end, of the war." They specify among other mercies the assistance derived from France, and the happy selection "of a commander in chief of the armies of the United States, who, in this important and difficult charge, has given universal satisfaction, who was alike acceptable to the citizen and the soldier, to the State in which he was born and to every other on the continent, and whose character and influence, after so long service, are not only unimpaired but augmented." [1]

The scarcity of copies of the Bible had long been felt as a serious evil. The colonies had been accustomed to depend on the mother country for a supply, and during the war this source had been cut off. An edition of the Scriptures was, for their feeble typographical resources, an immense under-

[1] Hodge's *History of the Presbyterian Church*, ii, 495.

taking. But in 1781 an enterprising Philadelphia printer, Robert Aitkin, had successfully accomplished it, and both religious and patriotic motives led the synod warmly to second the effort. "Taking into consideration the situation of many people under their care who, through the indigence of their circumstances, are not able to purchase Bibles and are in danger of perishing for lack of knowledge," they ordered contributions to be made for this purpose in all congregations, and appointed a committee to receive and apply them. "And as Mr. Aitkin, from laudable motives and with great expense, hath undertaken and executed an elegant impression of the Holy Scriptures, which on account of the importation of Bibles from Europe will be very injurious to his temporal circumstances, synod further agree that the said committee shall purchase Bibles of the said impression and no other; and earnestly recommend it to all to purchase such in preference to any other."

Whatever brings appropriately into view the character of that illustrious chief whom Providence had indeed preserved, as Davies prophetically saw, "for some important service to his country," and who had shown in his own example "how noble a virtue is patience, and how sure, when rightly exercised, of its own reward," will be regarded as suitable for these pages.

Dr. John Rodgers had served during a part of the war as chaplain of Heath's brigade. The Christian philanthropy and the resources of more recent times have provided that no soldier, even of such vast armies as those which crushed the French Empire in 1870, shall be unfurnished with at least the New Testament Scriptures. But beyond the preaching of the chaplain, the revolutionary troops enjoyed no means whatever for religious instruction. As the disbanding of the army was at hand, Dr. Rodgers earnestly desired that each soldier should receive as a parting gift from his country a copy of the word of life. The 12mo edition of Mr. Aitkin, just before issued, furnished the opportunity, and Dr. Rodgers addressed a letter to General Washington congratulating him on the restoration of peace and soliciting his coöperation in carrying out this scheme. General Washington replied as follows:—

"HEADQUARTERS, 11th June, 1783.

"DEAR SIR: I accept, with much pleasure, your kind congratulations on the happy event of peace, with the establishment of our liberties and independence.

"Glorious indeed has been our contest—glorious if we consider the prize for which we have contended, and glorious in its issue. But in the midst of our joys, I hope we shall not forget that to divine Providence is to be ascribed the glory and praise.

"Your proposition respecting Mr. Aitkin's Bible would have been particularly noticed by me had it

been suggested in season. But the late resolution of Congress for discharging part of the army, taking off near two-thirds of our members, it is now too late to make the attempt. It would have pleased me well if Congress had been pleased to make such an important present to the brave fellows who have done so much for the security of their country's right and establishment.

"I hope it will not be long before you will be able to go quietly to New York. Some patience, however, will yet be necessary. But patience is a noble virtue, and when rightly exercised, does not fail of its reward.

"With much regard and esteem, I am, dear doctor,

"Your most obedient servant,

"Go. Washington."

The synod also entered on measures for securing uniformity in the public praise of the Church. A committee was appointed to compare all the extant versions of psalmody and digest from them "one more suitable to our circumstances and taste than any we have got;" a scheme which has only been successfully carried out in our own immediate times.

Action in regard to marriage within the prohibited degrees, as supposed to be defined by the Levitical law; in regard to slavery and the baptism of slave children; in regard to the demission of the ministry (refusing to permit the names of secularized ministers to be dropped from the roll); in regard to the pastoral visitation of common schools (inviting

other churches to coöperate in this work); catechetical instruction in families, etc.,—was taken during these years.

The formation of new presbyteries broadened the geographical area of the Church; and it was found impossible in the condition of peace, as it had been during the disturbance of war, to secure the attendance of the remoter members. So long as it was made the business of no one in particular to attend, whole presbyteries were not infrequently absent.

It was quite natural, therefore, that attention should now be directed to the necessity of perfecting the organization of the Church, by providing for a representative assembly to be constituted of elected delegates. The thirteen States were occupied with this question at the same time with the thirteen presbyteries; and the preliminaries for a General Assembly and a Federal Congress went on *pari passu*. This measure was first brought before the synod by an overture in 1785, and was made a special order for the year following, all the presbyteries being notified and expressly charged to attend.[1]

At the time fixed—viz., at the sederunt of the

[1] The thirteen presbyteries at that time were New York, New Brunswick, First Philadelphia, Second Philadelphia, New Castle, Donegal, Lewes, Hanover, Orange, Dutchess, Suffolk, Redstone and South Carolina.

19th of May, 1786—after full discussion it was resolved that, "considering the number and extent of the churches under our care, and the inconvenience of the present mode of government by one synod, this synod will establish out of its own body three or more subordinate synods, out of which shall be composed a General Assembly, synod or council, agreeably to a system hereafter to be adopted."

At this point the present chapter closes. The successful carrying out of this important measure, the new impulse given by it to the growth of the Church, her subsequent trials and triumphs, fall to be related by another hand.

A few miscellaneous remarks may be allowed in conclusion.

The Presbyterian clergy of the Revolutionary period were well-educated men. Almost without exception they were graduates of American or foreign colleges. The era of modern science had not yet dawned, and a far larger proportion of the college curriculum than now consisted of drill in the elements of the Greek and Latin languages. French and German were almost entirely unknown. The Latin was still to a considerable extent the common language in which educated men of different nations did or might communicate with each other. Latin

epistolary correspondence was still not wholly obsolete. Latin epitaphs were still almost universal for scholars, and the official proceedings at college commencements were conducted entirely in that language. The ability to read and write Latin was therefore a necessary part of the culture of a Presbyterian clergyman, and it was with justice and reason that candidates for the ministry were required to present among other "trial-pieces" a Latin exegesis on some common head in divinity. This they were quite competent to do with integrity and with reasonable correctness of style. The surviving Latin compositions of the time are not inferior to those of the contemporaneous English or Continental scholars. The very different distribution of the students' time in our present academical and college course, and the introduction of the modern languages as media of communication between alien scholars, sufficiently explains the decay of Latin scholarship among us. That few candidates for the Presbyterian ministry are now able to compose correctly in the Latin language, and that the exegesis still required of them furnishes no test whatever (except a negative one) of their acquaintance with that language, is notorious; yet out of regard to the supposed requirement of the Form of Government, and in oversight of the alternative permission to employ "*these or other similar exer-*

cises" as tests of the candidate's literary fitness for the ministry, it is still commonly insisted on. Surely the time has come for dispensing with a measure which is both futile and fraudulent, and tends to throw ridicule on the serious business of licensing candidates to preach the gospel.

The pulpit style of the Presbyterian clergy of a hundred years ago presents generally a good example of strong, plain, undefiled English. It was wholly free from those affectations and tricks of speech by which feebleness of thought is sometimes attempted to be disguised. The prose of Dean Swift, of Addison and the English divines of the seventeenth century was their standard. When Samuel Johnson, with his customary suavity, said to Dr. John Ewing, "Sir, what do *you* know in America? You never read. You have no books there." "Pardon me, sir," was the reply, "we have read the *Rambler;*" which was doubtless true to a limited extent; but the inflated periods of that writer were no more to the taste of American scholars than his exaggerated toryism. During the hundred years that have since passed, the language has undergone no change. In the works of Dr. Rodgers, Stanhope Smith, Samuel Finley and their brethren, not a word will be found that is not now in good pulpit use. The sermons of Samuel Davies might be preached to-day, and only excite surprise for the somewhat

elaborate eloquence of the style, and the extraordinary force and pungency of their dealing with the conscience. Indeed, it was only in the colonial pulpit that the evangelical preaching of Howe and Baxter found an uninterrupted succession. The English language in its higher purity of written and spoken use, and evangelical preaching in its fullest development, came across the sea with the colonists, and domiciled themselves here by the altars of liberty.

The church architecture of the Revolutionary period in America was of course of a rude and simple character. The natural arches of the forest, from which the churches were hewn by the axes of the worshipers, as well as the heavy pressure of snow which the roofs were each winter required to sustain, would naturally have suggested Gothic form. But scientific knowledge of architecture was wholly lacking in the colonies; with each new settlement the demand for a sanctuary was immediate, and the people satisfied their need by the same hasty carpentry by which the sons of the prophets enlarged their accommodations at Gilgal. The first rough log churches had mostly given place a hundred years ago to plain white-painted structures, with straight-backed pews, lofty galleries and a pulpit perched halfway between the floor and the ceiling. Stove, upholstery, organ, they had none.

Church spires were by no means common, and bells were almost unknown, except in the larger cities. Even in New York an Episcopal congregation was indebted to the Lutherans for the loan of a church bell.

The day of peace and freedom had begun. The plowshare of war had broken up the public insensibility; the sowers went forth to sow. Divine influences came down as rain upon the mown grass, and the beneficent fruits of revivals of religion, missions and church enterprise of every kind began to appear.

From the Adoption of the Presbyterian Form of Government to the Reunion

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American independence has been achieved. The colonies have taken their place as free and independent States among the nations of the earth. In bringing about this the most momentous political event of the last century the ministry and laity of the Presbyterian Church bore an essential and a conspicuous part. These men were the descendants of the Huguenots whose blood, shed in the cause of religious freedom, had baptized almost every acre of France; of the Dutch, who under William the Silent, had struggled and fought against civil and religious despotism amidst the dikes of Holland; of the Scotchmen who signed the Covenant with the warm blood of their veins, and who had fought to the death under the blue banner of that Covenant; of the heroes whose valor at Londonderry turned the scale in favor of the Prince of Orange and secured the Protestant succession in England—

sons of the women who, during that memorable siege, carried ammunition to the soldiers, and in the crisis of the assault, sprang to the breach, hurled back the assailants and turned the tide of battle in the critical, imminent moment of the conflict.

These were not the men to be dazzled by specious pretexts, or to stand nicely balancing arguments of expediency, when issues touching human freedom were at stake. These were not the men to barter away their birthright for pottage. They who had endured so much in the cause of freedom in the Old World, who, for its sake, had left all and braved the perils of the ocean to seek a refuge in the forests of an unbroken wilderness, were not the men tamely to submit their necks to the yoke, how smoothly soever it might be fitted for them by the deft hands of king, Church or Parliament. Consequently, the Presbyterians in the colonies were almost to a man, and to *a woman*, patriots "indeed, in whom there was no guile."

In a Presbyterian community not far from the spot where the first blood of the Revolution was shed, in a Presbyterian convention which had for its presiding officer a ruling elder, was framed and promulgated the Mecklenburg Declaration, which embodied the spirit and the principles of the Declaration of Independence, and which antedates that document by the space of a year and more; and

even earlier than this, within the bounds of old Redstone Presbytery, the "Westmoreland Declaration" was made at Hanna's Town, in Western Pennsylvania.

None in all the land better understood the nature of the struggle, or more thoroughly appreciated the importance of the issue, than those men. They saw in the impending conflict more than a tax on tea or a penny stamp on paper—more even than "taxation without representation." In addition to political tyranny they perceived the ominous shadow of spiritual despotism, which threatened to darken the land to which they had fled as an asylum, and they esteemed their fortunes and their lives a cheap sacrifice at which to purchase for their posterity in succeeding generations the blessings of religious freedom.

Into the struggle, therefore, they threw themselves heart and soul. With enthusiastic devotion, they put at the service of their country the last penny of their substance and the last drop of their blood. Wherever a Presbyterian church was planted, wherever the Westminster Confession of Faith found adherents, wherever the Presbyterian polity was loved and honored, there intelligent and profound convictions in regard to civil and religious liberty were developed as naturally as the oak grows from the acorn, and there, when the crisis

came, strong arms and stout hearts formed an invulnerable bulwark for the cause of human freedom. As the Spartan defended his shield, as the Roman legions fought for their eagles, as a chivalrous knight leaped to the rescue of his sweetheart, so our Presbyterian ancestors, with a prodigal valor and an unquenchable ardor, sprang to the defense of their sacred rights.

An adequate history of their services, their sacrifices and their sufferings has never been written, and, alas! never can be written now. No monuments have been left from which such a history can be compiled. In the pulpit, in the halls of the provincial and the Continental Congresses, in the army as chaplains and as soldiers, the ministers rendered invaluable service by their eloquence, their wisdom, their learning, their courage and their example, while the laity took into the ranks a heroism as stalwart as that of the Ironsides of Cromwell. Presbyterian blood from shoeless feet tracked the snow at Valley Forge. From the Schuylkill to the Chartiers pulpits rang with utterances which were at once scriptural and patriotic, and which were so sound and fearless and inspiring that they deserve tó take rank in the series of kindred testimonies in the Scottish Church borne by such men as Knox, Buchanan, Rutherford, Brown of Wamphry, Cargill and Renwick. These utter-

ances embodied principles which, emanating from the republic of Geneva, consecrated by the holiest blood of Scotland, sheltered and defended by more than Spartan heroism and endurance in the forests of America, now underlie the institutions of every free government on the face of the whole earth.

Republicanism is Presbyterianism in the State; so that in the victory of our Revolutionary forefathers there was a triumph of principles in defense of which our ancestors in the ecclesiastical line had for generations poured out their blood like water. These principles could find no hospitable or congenial home in Europe, and had fled for refuge to the great ocean-bound wilderness as their last hiding-place. A few half-clad, half-starved and not half-equipped regiments of provincial militia bore the ark which contained the charter of freedom for the nations. They bore it bravely and well, and when the clouds of war drifted away, lo! there stood on these shores, disclosed to the gaze of the world, a Christian republic which, as a pharos, flings its light across the ocean to guide the footsteps of nations in the path of liberty, of progress and of universal brotherhood. Every civilized nation on the globe has felt the throb of our free life. Over the ark of our liberties dwells the political shekinah of the world, to which all the

oppressed shall look, and guided by which they shall at last be led into a large and goodly Canaan of civil and religious freedom.

But the war is over. The transcendent achievement has been won. After seven years of fierce and bitter struggle, dove-eyed Peace has spread over the land her shadowing wings, dripping with celestial benedictions. The inchoate elements of national life have crystallized into a compact and symmetrical republican government. The colonies have become States and the Constitution of the United States has been adopted.

Owing to their pronounced and intense patriotism during the war, the Presbyterian ministers and churches had borne the brunt of the fury of the enemy. Pastors were driven away from their flocks, churches were turned into barracks or stables, and in many instances were torn down or burned. Congregations left without pastors, and exposed to all the deleterious influences of war, were scattered as sheep without a shepherd. Many churches could adopt the refrain of the prophet, *Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire: and all our pleasant things are laid waste.*

But as soon as the sword was returned to its scabbard the Church addressed herself to the task

of restoring her broken walls, building up her waste places and gathering her scattered sheep to the fold again. With a sublime faith and an unerring intuition she divined the future greatness of the nation, and hastened to make such adjustments in her polity and organization as would enable her to meet worthily present and prospective responsibilities.

The complete constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, containing the Confession of Faith, the catechisms, the government and discipline, and the directory for the worship of God, was finally ratified and adopted by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia in the year 1788; and at the same meeting the necessary steps were taken toward the formation of a General Assembly by dividing the synod into four synods, and by ordering that a General Assembly, constituted out of the "said four synods," should meet in Philadelphia in May of the following year.

Thus organized and equipped, the Church stands abreast of the new era, "her loins girt about with truth, her feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," in her hand "the sword of the Spirit" and with her face set toward the West.

The first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America met in the Second Presbyterian Church in the city of Philadel-

phia on May 21, 1789, and was opened, according to the appointment of synod, with a sermon by Dr. Witherspoon.

In fancy let us visit this small but august body of men.

In the moderator's chair is the courtly Dr. Rodgers, and at the clerk's table sits the chivalrous Duffield—whose ancestors, reaching America by way of England, Scotland and Ireland, had their Huguenot blood enriched with Puritanic and Covenanting ingredients—who during the war had preached under fire, and who, along with Beatty, had braved the perils of the wilderness in crossing the Alleghanies, in order to set up the standard of Presbyterianism on the banks of the Monongahela, the Allegheny and the Ohio, and to proffer the blessings of the gospel to the Indians on the banks of the Muskingum. On the floor is Dr. Witherspoon, of distinguished presence and of still more distinguished achievement, the eminent divine, the able statesman, the pure and valiant patriot, who shone alike conspicuously in the pulpit, on the floor of Congress and in the president's chair, in whose veins ran the blood of John Knox, and whose whole life proved him to be a worthy descendant of the great Scottish Reformer. Beside him, and coming from the same presbytery (New Brunswick), and destined to be his successor in the presidency

of the College of New Jersey, is the eloquent and learned Dr. Stanhope Smith, the founder of Hampden-Sidney College, now in the fullness of his marvelous powers and at the zenith of his splendid fame, whose oratory recalled the grandeur of Davies and did not suffer in comparison with that of Patrick Henry.

There, too, is the polyhistoric, the encyclopedic scholar, the profound divine, the accomplished provost of the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. Ewing, who on an hour's notice could lecture on any subject in the curriculum of the university, who was the peer of Rittenhouse in mathematics, and who in conversation could keep old Dr. Samuel Johnson at bay. From Baltimore comes the renowned Dr. Patrick Allison, who went to that place when it contained only thirty or forty houses, and in a log hut had preached to a congregation of six families, but whose usefulness and reputation grew with the growth of the city, until, as a preacher, a presbyter and an accomplished and fearless controversialist, no one stood above him, and of whom Dr. Stanhope Smith said, "Dr. Allison is decidedly the ablest *statesman* we have in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church." There, too, is Cooper, one of the Apostles of the Cumberland Valley, a valiant military as well as spiritual leader; and the ungainly but saintly Moses Hoge, of Virginia, who,

destitute of the natural gifts and graces of oratory, so moved men by his "blood earnestness" that John Randolph said, "That man is the best of orators;" and McWhorter, who had been the chaplain of Knox's brigade, and who in the darkest hour of the Revolution hastened to headquarters to encourage the commander in chief; and Azel Roe, who inspired a cowardly regiment with courage and then led them into battle, and who was as full of humor as he was of courage and patriotism; and Latta, who with blanket and knapsack had accompanied members of his church to the camp and the battle field; and Dr. Sproat, in the pastorate the successor of Gilbert Tennent and the predecessor of Ashbel Green; and Dr. Robert Smith, who at the age of fifteen, having caught the spirit of Whitefield and having consecrated all the strength of a vigorous body to the work of preaching the gospel, was abundant in labors, and with his hand on the plow never once looked back; and Dr. Thomas Read, whose extensive missionary labors in the wilds of Delaware gave him so accurate a knowledge of the roads, paths and bypaths of the region, that he was the only man who could extricate Washington and his army from the perilous position which they occupied at Stanton, before the battle of Brandywine, so that the modest pastor of Drawyer's Creek may be denominated the saviour of his country;

and the genial Dr. Matthew Wilson, who was both a divine and a physician and eminent in both professions,—good men and true, all of them, who had "endured hardness as good soldiers" both in the cause of Christ and for their country.

In point of numbers this assembly was not large, there being on the roll only thirty-four commissioners, representing thirteen presbyteries, but in point of dignity, learning, ability, zeal and experience it compares favorably with any of its many illustrious successors. An able committee, raised for the purpose, reported fifteen rules for the government of the body, which have since been supplemented but never improved, so that substantially these are the rules by which, to this day, the General Assembly has been governed. Drs. Witherspoon, Allison and Stanhope Smith, the ablest committee which the Assembly could command, drew up an address to George Washington, President of the United States, which address, as a document, is worthy of the genius and eloquence of these three illustrious men, and which, while it has nothing in it of the cringing servility and sycophancy which are begotten of the adulterous union of Church and State, is yet, at the same time, a dignified and loyal acknowledgment of the "powers that be" as "ordained of God."

Regarding with apprehension the fact that many of the presbyteries had failed to send commissioners,

and thoroughly comprehending the importance of holding together the widely-separated parts of the Church by a common bond, and being as jealous against schism as the Israelites were when they went posting to Shiloh to demand of the trans-Jordanic tribes an explanation of the altar of witness, the Assembly adopted a circular letter "urging in the most earnest manner the respective synods to take effectual measures that all the presbyteries send up in due season their full representation," so that the scattered tribes of this Israel might, through their representatives, appear together once a year before the Lord at the sanctuary. Nor was the deplorable and pitiable condition of the frontiers forgotten or neglected, but received, as it deserved, most earnest and solemn attention. On a report of Drs. Allison and Stanhope Smith, the synods were requested to recommend to the General Assembly at their next meeting, two members, well qualified, to be employed in missions on our frontiers, for the purpose of organizing churches, administering ordinances, ordaining elders, collecting information concerning the religious state of these parts, and proposing the best means of establishing a gospel ministry among the people; and in order to provide necessary funds the presbyteries were enjoined to have collections made and forwarded with all convenient speed. This action was in full accord with

an unbroken line of deliverances stretching back to the very beginning of organic Presbyterianism in this country. The Church of our fathers was poor of purse, but rich in faith; and though "little among the thousands of Judah," she had a heart big enough to take in the world. From the first she has been a missionary Church. Woe be unto her if she lose that spirit!

Desirous, moreover, to spread the knowledge of eternal life contained in the Holy Scriptures, the Assembly adopted measures by which to aid the publication and dissemination of an American edition of the Bible, thus indicating the genuineness of their Protestantism by their love for and attachment to the word of God pure and simple.

Adam Rankin, from the Presbytery of Transylvania, who, like the thief in the gospel, seems not to have "entered by the door," but to have climbed up some other way, brought before the Assembly a portentous overture to the effect that the Church had fallen into a "great and pernicious error in the public worship of God by disusing Rouse's versification of David's Psalms and adopting, in the room of it, Watts' imitation." Mr. Rankin being heard patiently "as long as he chose to speak," which was at "great length," an able and judicious committee was appointed to confer with him privately; but efforts toward relieving his mind proving futile,

he was earnestly "recommended to exercise that Christian charity toward those who differed from him in their views on this matter which was exercised toward himself, and he was guarded to be careful not to disturb the peace of the Church on this head." These reasonable and fraternal recommendations were disregarded by him, however; and returning home, by a fierce and fanatical agitation of the subject, he produced in the Church in Kentucky a schism which for years entailed lamentable disaster upon the cause of Christ in that State. The temper and action of the Assembly in the premises show that the policy of the Church on the question of psalmody was settled.

In answer to an overture as to whether the "General Assembly would admit to their communion a presbytery who are totally averse to the doctrine of receiving, hearing or judging of any appeals from presbyteries to synods or from synods to General Assemblies, because in their judgment it is inconsistent with Scripture and the practice of the primitive Church," it was said "that although they consider the right of appeal from the decision of an inferior judicature to a superior one an important privilege, which no member of their body ought to be deprived of, yet they at the same time declare that they do not desire any member to be active in any case which may be inconsistent with the

dictates of his conscience." This does not prove or argue that the Assembly, which was almost entirely composed of Scotchmen and Irishmen or those of Scotch-Irish extraction, held or sympathized with lax ecclesiastical views, but it only shows that in peculiar and delicate circumstances the Assembly acted cautiously, prudently and charitably. It would have been marvelously strange if, after all her testimony and all her sufferings in defense of her principles, the Church should at this point have tamely repudiated these principles. The very calmness and mildness of the answer rather show the firmness of her convictions and the strength of her position.

The Church at this time consisted of four synods, sixteen presbyteries, one hundred and seventeen ministers and four hundred and nineteen churches, two hundred and four of which were vacant. Single presbyteries embraced whole States and indefinite expanses of territories besides. Pastors had parishes as large as England, Scotland and Ireland all put together.

The shock of the French revolution was felt on these shores. Infidelity in France, in the name of liberty, equality and fraternity, had committed atrocities for which human speech has coined no fitting or adequate terms. In its wanton, blasphemous impiety it had violated all sanctities. it

had desecrated all shrines, it had trampled upon all rights, human and divine, it had christened the dreadest instrument of modern times the "holy guillotine," it had striven to quench the light of hope in the heart of man by decreeing that "there is no God" and that "death is an eternal sleep," it had wreaked its direst vengeance on the living, and then, hyena-like, had rifled the grave that it might dishonor the bones and dust of the illustrious dead. It has left its track on the page of history as the trail of a filthy snake, in orgies of lust and in carnivals of blood. The mephitic atmosphere of its licentious and ribald atheism was wafted across the ocean, and threatened to blight with a curse the virgin life of the young republic. If the principles of French infidelity had fairly taken root in American soil, they would have produced a harvest of anarchy, lust and carnage such as they had produced in their native soil; and for some time after the Revolutionary War it seemed that such a catastrophe as this awaited the nation.

During the war France was our ally, and thus the sympathy between the two countries was close and responsive. French fashions, French manners and French modes of thought and of living dazzled the minds of many. Some of the leading statesmen of the time and many of the lower politicians were avowed infidels. French infidelity was discussed

around the camp-fires, in legislative halls, in social circles, at the Federal capital and in the backwoods of remote Western settlements. War, too, had left its dregs and débris of vice, idleness, drunkenness and debauchery. The very air was heavy with the poison of deadly error, and the Church itself felt its paralyzing influence. Formalism, indifference and skepticism prevailed among professing Christians, while many of the pastors were mere "hirelings who cared not for the sheep." The foundations of religion, morality and of social order seemed to be giving way. In view of this state of things, the General Assembly, in the year 1798, issued a pastoral letter which to this day sounds like the blast of a trumpet. The letter speaks eloquently and solemnly of the "convulsions in Europe" and of the "solemn crisis" in this country; it points with alarm to the "bursting storm which threatened to sweep before it the religious principles, institutions and morals of the people;" it frames a dreadful indictment against the age, charging it with corruption of manners, prevailing impiety, horrible profanation of the Lord's Day, contempt for religion, abounding infidelity, which assumes a front of daring impiety and possesses a mouth filled with blasphemy; and it declares that among ministers of the gospel and professors of Christianity there was a degree of

supineness, inattention, formality, deadness, hypocrisy and pernicious error which threatened the dissolution of religious society. A dark picture, truly, but not a whit darker than the subject which it portrayed.

Nor were such views and forebodings confined to the clergymen. Patrick Henry, in a letter to his daughter, says, "The view which the rising greatness of our country presents to my eyes is greatly tarnished by the general prevalence of deism, which, with me, is but another name for vice and depravity."

The clouds which thus lowered over the new States and threw their black shadows of evil portent far into the future were scattered by the breath of the Spirit of God going forth in powerful and widespread revivals of religion. During the Revolutionary War, on the borders of Western Pennsylvania, in a rude fort into which had been driven the scattered families of a sparse neighborhood, and in which they were held besieged by bloody savages, through the modest, earnest conversations of one layman, the mighty work began which forever settled on these shores the issue as between the gospel and French infidelity. It was "an handful of corn in the earth," in a strange seed-plot, but the fruit thereof to-day, in all these States, and far hence to the Gentiles, "shakes like Lebanon." "It

is the Lord's doings, and it is wondrous in our eyes." From the year 1781 to the year 1787 there was almost a continuous effusion of the Holy Ghost in marvelous power upon the churches in Western Pennsylvania. Souls were drawn as by an irresistible magnet to the pulpit, and held for days and nights under the power of the truth in its enlightening and saving efficacy. To measure the results of such a work at such a time, in a society which was in a formative state, is as impossible as it would be to estimate the contents of the covenanted blessings of Abraham. From that rude fort "their line is gone out through all the earth."

When the work had gone on for five years in Western Pennsylvania, there might have been found across the Blue Ridge, one Saturday afternoon, in a dense forest, a mile from Hampden-Sidney College, four young students holding a prayer meeting. For the first time in their lives they opened their lips in prayer in the presence of any except their God. Hidden in the deep recesses of the woods, they stammered forth their broken petitions, but no prayers uttered beneath the domes of grand cathedrals and in the presence of thousands of rapt worshipers were ever more efficacious. The next meeting of these students was appointed in one of their rooms in the college, and behind

bolted doors and in suppressed voices they began to sing and pray; but the news of the strange proceeding spread rapidly through the college, and soon a mob was collected at the door of the room, whooping, thumping, swearing and threatening vengeance; nor was the riot quelled until two of the professors appeared upon the scene and vigorously exercised their official authority. *A prayer meeting raised a riot in Hampden-Sidney College!* If we take into account the additional fact that outside of this little praying circle there was not a copy of the Bible among the students, we can form an idea of the degree to which the leaven of infidelity had infected the minds of the young men of that generation. From that little prayer meeting in the woods began a precious work of grace which spread through the counties south of the James River and swept up and down the great valley of Virginia, baptizing in its course the two literary institutions, Hampden-Sidney College and Liberty Hall Academy, which afterwards became Washington College, and giving to the ministry such men as Drury Lacy, with "the silver voice and the silver hand," William Hill, Carey Allen, Nash Legrand, James Blythe, John Lyle, James Turner and Archibald Alexander. Thus the proud, vaunting speculations and blasphemous scoffings and swollen insolences of infidelity were silenced in Virginia by

the power of the Holy Ghost exhibited in the conversion of souls.

Such power as this was not pent up within State lines. The venerable Patillo came up from North Carolina to see the wonderful works of God, and returning home with mind and heart aglow finished his ministry in a blaze of religious fervor. A young man who years before had left North Carolina in order to seek an education in Western Pennsylvania, and who in the meantime had been converted under the preaching of the Rev. Joseph Smith, and who was among the first of those who were educated under Dr. McMillan, having been licensed by the Presbytery of Redstone, started southward to visit his kindred, and on the way stopped at Prince Edward and caught the holy contagion of the revival there, was the means under God of arousing the churches from a deathlike stupor and of diffusing the spiritual awakening from the Dan to the Catawba. With intense convictions, a fearless and merciless reprover of sin, a pitiless scourger of formality and hypocrisy, with an impassioned manner and a voice like seven trumpets, the Rev. James McGready flashed the terrors of the law into the minds and hearts of men until the stoutest quailed. After some years of most arduous and fruitful labor in North Carolina he removed to Kentucky, where his searching, discriminating preach-

ing became the means of the great awakening in that State, the mighty influence of which, in a refluent tide, swept over Tennessee, the Carolinas, Virginia and Western Pennsylvania.

The revival in Virginia and North Carolina had brought into the ministry a band of young men whose hearts God had touched in a signal manner. Never was a knight of the cross more eager to encounter hardship and peril in the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre from the hand of the infidel than were these young soldiers of the Lord Jesus eager in their flaming zeal to engage in arduous and perilous enterprises for the glory of their Master. In order to furnish them a suitable field, the Synod of Virginia, in the year 1789, organized a committee on missions, which from year to year sent forth these young heralds to carry the gospel to destitute places. Among these went forth such men as Nash Legrand, an Apollo in physical grace and proportion, with a voice whose modulations were as pleasing as the dulcet notes of a lute, and "whose labors were more extensive in spreading the revival than any other agent employed in the work;" William Hill, one of the immortal four who held the prayer meeting in the woods at Prince Edward; the eccentric, witty, brilliant, genial and eloquent Carey Allen, "whom the common people heard gladly," and whose intense ardor

soon consumed his physical life; Robert Marshall, who, spared through six hard-fought battles of the Revolutionary War to become a soldier in a holier war, enlisted all the enthusiasm of his impulsive nature in the work of preaching the gospel with earnestness and startling directness; Archibald Alexander, whom to name is to eulogize; William Calhoun, the companion of Carey Allen in his missionary toils and perils; the brilliant, able and scholarly John Poage Campbell (a lineal descendant of the seraphic Rutherford), whose sledge hammer logic dashed to pieces the Pelagianism of Craighead, and who wielded a pen which was at one time as keen as a Damascus blade and at another as terrific and crushing as the battle-ax of a mailed knight; the praying Rannels; James Blythe, whose room had been the rendezvous of the praying students at Hampden-Sidney College; and Robert Stuart, the laborious missionary, the accomplished educator, the faithful pastor, a Melanchthon in council, but a Luther in battle. Of this number some labored in Virginia and some went to Kentucky. These were the young guard of Presbyterianism, who, snatching up the drooping standards of the sacramental host, with a holy chivalry bore them onward through teeming dangers and sore privations, to plant them firmly and conspicuously on outpost and picket line. These were the youth-

ful heroes whose clarion voices, tuned to the love of Jesus, called the Church from out her entrenchments, in which she had for long been cowering, and made her aggressive in her whole mien, attitude and spirit, and led her forward to victories which rendered the spiritual opening of the nineteenth century as bright as "another morn risen on mid-noon."

The last century drew to its close amidst dense spiritual darkness in Kentucky. The rapid increase of population had far outstripped the supply of ministers and the multiplication of the means of grace. The labors of Father Rice and a few men of kindred spirit were wholly inadequate to meet the demands of the times. Amidst the contagious spirit of land speculation and the exciting scenes and incidents of border life, many who at their former homes had been exemplary Christians forgot their vows, struck their colors and went over to the ranks of the enemy, while those who, although not professors, had been respecters of religion, became open scoffers, and open scoffers grew more and more bold in iniquity. Mammon, rum and mad adventure ruled the hearts of men with despotic sway. Infidelity, vice and irreligion came in like a flood, wave on wave, threatening to overwhelm and sweep away the foundations of all social, civil and ecclesiastical institutions. "*The people sat in*

the region and shadow of death." In the perilous crisis many of the ministers of the gospel grew faint-hearted, and through cowardice or apostasy betrayed the cause which they were sworn to defend. A stiff and stark formalism, and the unhappy controversy and schism on the subject of psalmody, had well-nigh destroyed all piety in the Church, while in the walks of public life infidelity prevailed and among the masses abominable and high-handed crime abounded.

Such was the desperate condition of things in Kentucky when the young missionaries from Virginia and North Carolina entered it and began to preach the gospel with such a fullness of conviction and with so awful vividness that all classes of men, from the philosophic skeptic to the red-handed desperado, were swayed by its power as the fields of headed grain bend before the sweep of the wind or as clouds marshal to the step of the storm.

The revival began in the year 1797 in the churches which were under the pastoral care of the Rev. James McGready, who preached the most vital and solemn doctrines of the gospel with prodigious force and startling directness. The religious interest thus begun extended and deepened until, in the year 1800, on sacramental occasions, thousands came from far and near, bringing with them provisions and conveniences for temporary lodging. This was

the origin of camp meetings; and when once inaugurated, they became a distinctive feature of the times and constituted a marked agency of the work as it was carried on. When the camp was established, it became, for the time being, the center of all life and interest. The plow rusted in the furrow, the sickle was hung up even in the time of harvest; all ages and all classes swelled the crowds which poured in from all sides, as the tribes of Israel converged by all paths to the tabernacle. Thousands of vehicles, with their thousands of neighboring horses, filled the groves and gave the appearance of an army encamped. Men, women and children, old age with its staff, the child with its rattle, the invalid with his bed, the matron with her cares, the maiden in the freshness of her beauty, the young man in the glory of his strength, were there by tens of thousands.

From the moving, teeming multitudes the hum of voices arose like the distant roar of the sea. Now the volume of praise arises as the "voice of many waters," and now all is hushed except the impassioned tones of the preacher, which, magnetized by the burden of the message and by intensity of emotion, kindle to a flame the hearts of the breathless throng as when the wind drives to race-horse speed the leaping flames on a dry prairie. The spectacle at night, with the scattered tents and wagons, and

the multitudes of men, women and children and horses, all dimly revealed by camp-fires, torches, lamps and candles, and the deep, dark, silent forest around, made up a scene fit for a Raphael to picture in colors or for a Milton to paint in words. Amidst scenes and incidents so wild and strange and impressive, with so many inflammable elements commingling and with so many intense influences and forces coöperating to produce the deepest conviction of sin on the one hand and to excite the most ecstatic devotion on the other, it need not be a matter of astonishment that lamentable extravagances both of sentiment and of conduct were developed; but these extravagances formed no essential part of the revival, and are to be carefully discriminated from it. Some of the ablest and wisest pastors who were engaged in the work solemnly protested against the "bodily exercises" and all their unseemly concomitants. The Lord sent a gracious revival, but through the folly and vanity of man it was marred and disfigured by abominable excrescences; or, in the language of the venerable Father Rice, "it was sadly mismanaged, dashed down and broken to pieces," so that the work which began under auspices so bright ended in disastrous fanaticism, heresy and schism. When the Spirit of God moved the waters which had been so long stagnant, profuse froth and scum were thrown to the

surface in the form of New Lightism, Universalism, Arianism and fanaticism.

The New Light schism in its brief and fitful career swept up the cast-off skins of errors, new and old, as they lay strewn along the track of time all the way from Gnosticism to Shakerism, and was at last merged into that creedless Babel of theological opinions founded by Alexander Campbell.

The widespread religious interest created a demand for ministers of the gospel, and at the same time begat a desire to preach the gospel in the minds of many who had no academical or other training to fit them for the sacred office. The licensing and ordaining such men, in utter and high-handed defiance of the requirements of the Book of Discipline, both in regard to literary qualifications and to the adoption and subscription of the Confession of Faith, led to the schism which resulted in the organization of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church.

From these conflicts the Church emerged greatly reduced in numbers and resources, it is true, but, nevertheless, purer and more compact than before. Amidst the fierce storms she preserved her standards intact, vindicated the cause of theological education, resolutely refused to abate an iota of the conditions of subscription of the Confession, and demonstrated to all the world that in times of high-

wrought excitement it is safer to stand on the rock of principle than to drift with the eddying currents of expediency.

Notwithstanding these deplorable fanaticisms, apostasies and lamentable schisms, there was a genuine and extensive work of grace throughout the churches in Kentucky and Tennessee. The bodily exercises were no part of the work of the Holy Ghost. The revival was a work of God notwithstanding the bodily exercises. In the prolonged and intense excitement the infirmities of human nature threw to the surface a great many irregularities and extraordinary physical phenomena which, to a degree, obscured the real work in its progress and results. The winnowed wheat glides quietly into the garner, while the chaff and mildew darken and pollute the air.

In the second year of the present century the revival began at Cross Roads, in Orange County, North Carolina, and from that center radiated its spiritual quickening light and power through a wide circle. Such was the interest in hearing the gospel from the living teacher that thousands, in the depth of winter, stood listening the livelong day in drenching storms of rain, sleet and snow. Meetings were continued through the whole night to the breaking of the day, and then were resumed at nine o'clock on the next morning. The infidel, the

scoffer, the formal professor, the drunkard, the debauchee, the giddy youth, the hardened criminal, the learned, the ignorant, the bond, the free, the master, the slave, were all brought under the resistless influence and were made one in Christ Jesus. No barriers erected by Satan were sufficient to arrest the progress of the work; but purged to a great extent of the extravagances and excrescences which had been so prolific of mischief in Kentucky, it gained thereby in depth and power, and has left in the Carolinas spots as marked in the memory, and as dear to the hearts, of Presbyterians, as the moors and mountains of Scotland are sacred in the eyes of the Covenanters.

In Virginia the revival began in a little prayer meeting of private Christians among the mountains where there was no stated ministry—another instance of proof that genuine revivals are not produced by blowing trumpets or by the impressive marshaling of great crowds. Now, as ever, the Lord is not in the storm nor the earthquake nor the fire, but in the "still small voice." The more quietly and obscurely a revival begins, the greater is its real power. The influence of that little band of praying disciples among the mountains, not one of whom probably could construct a half dozen consecutive sentences of good English, rose like the little cloud which the servant of Elijah saw from

the top of Carmel, and descended in copious showers of blessing throughout the State for many years thereafter.

In the autumn of the year 1802 there were marvelous displays of divine grace in the pastoral charge of the Rev. Elisha McCurdy, consisting of the churches of Three Springs and Cross Roads in Western Pennsylvania, in which churches a praying band had for some time before been observing a concert of prayer on each Thursday evening at sunset. The gracious influences thus kindled soon spread to the congregations of Cross Creek, Raccoon, Upper Buffalo and Chartiers, whose pastors were respectively the Rev. Thomas Marquis, the Rev. Joseph Patterson, the Rev. John Anderson and the Rev. John McMillan. The interest and power of this revival culminated at the "great Buffalo sacrament," in November, 1802, at Upper Buffalo, Washington County, Pennsylvania. Vast crowds attended this meeting, and religious services were continued almost without interruption from Saturday noon to Tuesday evening, and all these exercises were accompanied with marvelous displays of divine power. During the progress of this meeting the Rev. Elisha McCurdy preached his celebrated "war sermon," under the power of which, according to eye-witnesses, it seemed that every tenth man had been smitten down. Rarely in the history of the

Church have such ministers labored together in a revival as met in this one—Patterson, "full of faith and the Holy Ghost," Marquis of the silver tongue, Anderson, whose searching discourses penetrated the hidden places of the human heart as a surgeon's probe goes to the bottom of a festering wound, and the lion-like McMillan, whose thunderous tones in preaching the terrors of the law made sinners feel that the trumpet of the archangel was sounding. Under the preaching of such men began the wonderful work of grace which in its progress reached and blessed "every Presbyterian congregation west of the mountains in Pennsylvania."

Nor were these outpourings of the spirit confined to the South and the West. In the eastern part of the Church the revival influence was not so mighty nor so extraordinary in its phenomena, yet it was no less genuine or precious or far-reaching in its influence and results. In the year 1802 a deep and continued work of grace began in the First Church of Newark, New Jersey, which was then under the collegiate pastorate of Dr. Alexander McWhorter and the Rev. Edward Dorr Griffin. The ministry of Dr. McWhorter had been a series of revivals, and the history of this ministry had a brilliant continuation under Dr. Griffin, a physical and intellectual giant, whose splendid endowments were consecrated without reserve to the service of his Lord

and Master; and whether preaching in a metropolitan pulpit or in a schoolhouse or in a cramped and dingy townhall, these endowments were all brought into play with all their overpowering effulgence. His wonderful endowments both of body and of mind, his majestic presence and his magnificent oratory, place him conspicuously in the front rank of the preachers of all the ages; and a revival of religion was the occasion on which he seemed to be most at home and on which his faculties worked most harmoniously and most brilliantly.

While in commanding ability and Demosthenic eloquence Dr. Griffin was without a peer, there were colaborers of his who were not a whit behind him in devotion and in influence. Such were the Rev. Henry Kollock, upon whom the mantle of Whitefield seems to have fallen, Dr. James Richards, afterwards the successor of Dr. Griffin in the First Church of Newark, New Jersey, the Rev. Asa Hillyer, whose every instinct was evangelistic, and whose thoughts and prayers accompanied his gifts to the ends of the earth, the witty and genial Armstrong (Amzi, D. D.), the amiable Perrine (Matthew La Rue, D. D.), Robert Finley, "the father of the American Colonization Society," who, in his enthusiasm for the cause which he had espoused, brought the mightiest minds of the United States Senate to sit at his feet. These brethren, quickened

by the spirit of revival, went forth two by two through the destitute portions of New Jersey, in quest of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and in these missionary tours they were greatly blessed. Preaching to the miners among the mountains they saw, as Whitefield in England had seen, the tears of penitence wash white furrows down the begrimed and hardened cheeks of these men. The work was quite general throughout the State, and persons of all ages and of all ranks and classes were brought to Christ.

From the year 1803 to the year 1812 the narratives on the state of religion which were adopted by the successive General Assemblies are almost uniformly cheering and inspiring by their intelligence of revival, of victory over infidelity, which had been so much dreaded, of steady, healthful growth and increasing aggressive power on the part of the Church. One year brings the news that "there was scarcely a presbytery under the care of the General Assembly from which some pleasing intelligence had not been announced, and that in most of the northern and eastern presbyteries revivals of religion of a more or less general nature had taken place." In the following year we hear of remarkable outpourings of the Spirit of God over the "vast region extending from the Ohio River to the lakes, which region a few years before had

been an uninhabited wilderness," as well as in the Synods of New Jersey, New York and Albany. Then again the glad tidings come up from Long Island, from the banks of the Hudson and from the "newly-settled regions in the western parts of the State of New York," which desert, under the auspices of grace, promised to become as the garden of the Lord; and at another time these glad tidings came from Philadelphia, Cape May, Baltimore and Washington City. From time to time the delegates from the Congregational Churches of New England brought good news of revivals in Connecticut, in Yale College, in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Maine. From the Merrimac to the Mississippi, from Cape Fear to Cape Cod, from the Chesapeake to the lakes, came year after year tidings of revival, of the conversion of sinners, of the discomfiture of infidelity, and of the triumphs of grace, which were more glorious than any that were ever bulletined by martial heroes from Nimrod to Moltke. In all this wide circle the General Assembly from its watch-tower "could trace the footsteps of Jehovah," could perceive distinctly amidst the tumultuous strife the progress of the triumphal chariot of the Lord of hosts, and could see the pillar of cloud and of fire going before the people as they penetrated the great Western wilderness. With the

smoke of the "clearing" rose the incense of prayer and praise. Thus into the foundations of our national institutions went the tempered mortar of sound theology and of vital godliness. With these fathers religion was not a theory or a philosophy, but a life.

The narratives on the state of religion frequently and eloquently refer to the conquests of grace over infidelity and false philosophy. They tell how these opposing forces were by the power of God driven from the field, and how their champions were either converted or else covered with confusion. They also repeatedly rejoice in the fact that the educated mind of the nation was turning more and more to the cross of Christ. When we remember the widespread prevalence of infidelity in the latter part of the eighteenth century and the front of brazen-faced assurance which it put on, and when we think of the persistent and malignant efforts which were made to brand Christianity as a vulgar delusion, utterly unworthy the consideration of an intelligent mind, and when we consider how this seductive infidelity, under the guise of philosophy and respectability, had poisoned the political and social life of the nation,—we can understand the solicitude of the Church in the solemn crisis, and know why it was that she so rejoiced when she saw the banner of the cross lifted up and advancing,

while the standards of the enemy went down amidst the panic-stricken ranks of unbelief.

Thus by the power of the Holy Ghost the gates of the new century on this continent were swung open. The Sun of righteousness arose, and the sentinels, from Plymouth Rock to the peaks of the Cumberland Mountains, passed the watchword, "*The morning cometh.*"

The first pulsations of organic Presbyterianism in this country were the throbbings of missionary zeal. As early as the year 1707 the presbytery ordered that "every minister of the presbytery supply neighboring desolate places where a minister is wanting and opportunity of doing good offers." The entire ministry of the Church was thus organized into a missionary corps. Like the children of Issachar, they were "men that had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do." They divined the coming grandeur of the empire which, springing up in the forests of America, was to stretch "from sea to sea," and they recognized clearly and felt profoundly the supreme necessity of laying the foundations of this empire in the principles of the word of God, so that it might be able to withstand the winds and floods and earthquake shocks which it must encounter in its march down the centuries. The

Church and country greatly needed godly and faithful ministers, and also the means by which these ministers could be supported. Earnest and repeated cries for both men and money were sent to England, Scotland and Ireland, and any favorable response to these entreaties awakened the liveliest sentiments of gratitude in the hearts of these laborious, self-denying servants of God, who, with scanty material resources, but with a marvelous wealth of faith, were humbly and heroically discharging the obscure duties which belong to the "day of small things."

At the first meeting of the Synod of Philadelphia an overture was adopted to the effect that the several members of the synod "contribute something to the raising of a fund for pious uses." These ministers gave of their poverty, and according to the spirit of the overture, it was only after they had thus given, that they might "use their interest with their friends on proper occasions to contribute something to the same purpose." They did not merely inculcate benevolence, "as the manner of some is," but gave a practical exemplification of it. They not only pointed out the way to their flocks, but led them in that way. As I may not traverse this part of the field, which has been so thoroughly canvassed, let it suffice to say that the Presbyterian Church in this country, from the very first, has been

in heart and soul, in body and spirit, in life and limb, a missionary organization.

The General Assembly took up and carried forward the work which had been inaugurated by the presbytery and the synod. At its first meeting this subject occupied the earnest thought and care of the General Assembly, and the synods were enjoined to furnish, through the presbyteries, suitable missionaries, and the churches were urged to take collections for the cause, that thus both men and means might be furnished for the establishment of churches on the frontiers.

In the next year (1790) the Synod of Virginia, not having received the official action of the General Assembly, organized a very efficient "Commission of Synod," which sent its missionaries from the "bay shore to the Mississippi." I have in another connection spoken of the Commission of the Synod of Virginia, of the remarkable band of missionaries which that Commission sent forth, and of the great work which these missionaries accomplished within the borders of Virginia and in Kentucky and Tennessee. The Synod of North Carolina also inaugurated measures of its own for advancing the picket line along the extensive frontier. These synods were to report their operations to the General Assembly.

By these different agencies and from these

different centers the aggressive work of the Church was pushed vigorously forward. The missionaries were itinerant, traveling over fields immense in extent and bristling with difficulties and dangers. The General Assembly sent its missionaries mainly to Central New York, Northern Pennsylvania and to the Eastern Shore of Maryland. One circuit extended from Lake George to the northwestern frontier of Pennsylvania. Another stretched from Northumberland County along the branches of the Susquehanna, and beyond the head waters of that river northward to Lake Ontario and westward to Lake Erie. At the beginning of the century the Synod of North Carolina had sent its missionaries, in connection with the missionaries of the General Assembly, westward to the Mississippi and southward well-nigh to the Gulf of Mexico.

In these aggressive movements of the Church the Indians were not forgotten; the work of "gospelizing" them occupied the early and earnest attention of the General Assembly. Abundant and urgent incentives to such an enterprise were found in the condition and necessities of these savage tribes, while splendid examples of devotion and success in this field were on record as a sanction and an encouragement in the undertaking. The immortal author of *The Treatise on the Will*, "the greatest divine of the age," had spent the fullest

and the ripest of his years among the Indians at Stockbridge, Massachusetts; and Brainerd, by his labors and apostolic zeal among the same people on the Delaware and the Susquehanna, had given to Christendom new ideas on the subject of missionary consecration and enthusiasm, and on the power of the gospel as a saving and civilizing agent among the lowest and most degraded classes. Under the power of such incentives, and in the light of these great examples, the gospel was preached to the Indians along the frontier from the Hudson to the Mississippi. Our forefathers, with their trusty rifles as a defense in the one hand, held out with the other the Bread of Life and the blessings of civilization and education to their treacherous and bloody foes. The dreadful war whoop was answered by the trumpet of the gospel of peace. The Church kept bravely abreast of the line of population as it advanced westward. The watchman of Zion, seeing the standards of the sacramental host borne steadily onward over mountains, across rivers, through difficult and perilous places, and planted amidst the log cabins of the frontiersmen and the wigwams of the Indians from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, could have taken up the shout of the mediæval poet:

> "The royal banners forward go,
> The cross shines forth with mystic glow."

Presbyterianism has always been the patron and promoter of learning. An open Bible, an enlightened intellect and an unfettered conscience have ever been her watchwords. Whithersoever she has gone she has borne the torch of learning along with her. Her goings forth have been attended by an illumination like to that which attended the steps of Milton's Raphael in Eden. The pioneers of American Presbyterianism, true to the traditions of the past, carried the lamp of learning with them into the wilderness. Under the bare and rude rafters of log cabins they held converse with the mighty spirits of Greece and Rome, and within sound of the Indian war whoop and within sight of the council-fires of savage tribes they laid the foundations of literary institutions whose influence has had a wider reach and a deeper current than ever belonged to the doctrines of the porch or the academy.

The log college of Tennent on the banks of the Neshaminy first gave the distinctive stamp to American Presbyterianism, and that of Blair at Fagg's Manor, (Pa.), was scarcely less influential, and shall ever have a secure place in its unique historic niche so long as it can be said, "Samuel Davies was educated here and went forth into the world an exponent and exemplar of his *Alma Mater;*" while that of Finley at Nottingham, Md., sent forth such men

as Dr. Waddell, the immortal blind preacher, whose eloquence William Wirt has made familiar to every schoolboy.

In Western Pennsylvania, as early as 1782, the Rev. Thaddeus Dodd opened his log academy on Ten Mile Creek; the Rev. Joseph Smith, at Upper Buffalo, appropriating his kitchen for the purpose of a Latin school, gave it the dignified and classical title, "The Study"; while even earlier than this Dr. McMillan, on the banks of the Chartiers, laid the foundations of Jefferson College.

The same policy was pursued in North Carolina. The self-educated Patillo taught a classical school at Granville; Dr. Hall had his famous "Clio's Nursery" at Snow Creek, and his "Academy of the Sciences," with its philosophical apparatus, at his own house; the flaming evangelist McGready opened a school at his house; Wallis had a classical school at New Providence, McCorkle at Salisbury, and McCaule at Centre. Patillo and Hall not only taught, but wrote text-books. The spirit of these men is indicated by an incident in the life of Patillo. Once, in his absence from home, his house was burned; and the first question on meeting his wife was, "*My dear, are my books safe?*"

Down the beautiful valleys of the Holston and the Clinch, in Tennessee, emigration poured from North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New

Jersey. The first settled minister in this region was the Rev. Samuel Doak, who built a log college, which in 1788 was incorporated as Martin Academy, the first literary institution established in the valley of the Mississippi, and which afterwards, in 1795, became Washington College. Subsequently removing to Greene County, Mr. Doak opened his "Tusculum," an academy to prepare young men for college. This institution also developed into a college. A small library procured for Washington College in Philadelphia was carried to Tennessee in sacks on pack horses. In five years after the first settlement of the State by Daniel Boone steps were taken toward the founding of a seminary of learning in Kentucky. The originators and promoters of this scheme were Presbyterians, and the school, the first in Kentucky, was opened in the house of Father Rice.

Presbyterianism is an Aaron's rod which always buds with intellectual as well as with spiritual life. The Graces and the Muses, in chaste and modest fellowship with Christian virtues, dwelt in the Western forests. Beside the fires on the altars of pure religion burned the lamp of sound learning. "The church, the schoolhouse and the college grew up with the log cabin, and the principles of religion were proclaimed and the classics taught where glass windows were unknown and books were carried on pack horses."

Devotion to freedom, profound conviction of duty, staunch and unswerving loyalty to truth, stern adherence to principle, Catholic charity, an active benevolence, love of learning, the spirit of missions and the power of revival,—these were the vital forces of early American Presbyterianism; and these forces had as the theater of their operation the republic of the United States, with its vast and unsolved problems and its untold possibilities of wealth and power, whilst as the epoch of their development these forces had the nineteenth century, with its teeming enterprises, its concentrating energies, its momentous conflicts and issues.

Having thus endeavored to set before you clearly, in its distinctive characteristics, the Presbyterian Church of America during the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth century, and having endeavored to place the Church fairly abreast of the mighty current of modern history, the rest of my task must be dispatched more summarily. In the execution of it I shall give only broad outlines and shall deal with forces rather than with facts.

The work of revival, the power of which had been felt from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi, had evoked the spirit of missions, and the spirit of missions had enlarged the views and broadened the

sympathies of Christians and of churches, and in this way different denominations had been brought together in friendly coöperation. In the year 1802 the General Assembly adopted the Plan of Union, under which a Presbyterian church might have a Congregational pastor or a Congregational church might have a Presbyterian pastor, these pastors retaining their respective ecclesiastical relations. The motives which prompted this action were in the highest degree laudable and honorable, but the practical operation of the plan was beset with difficulties, and these difficulties soon began to manifest themselves. Swift currents were now sweeping the Church out into untried waters. New elements, new forces and new issues entered into the history year by year. The incidents of the drama thicken. Events hasten; the tide of mingling peoples rolls westward; the steps of divine Providence will not tarry; States in the South and in the West rise as by magic; along new lines of trade and travel cities spring up in a night; vast and important mission-fields are rapidly opening, and the Church has neither the men nor the means with which to occupy these fields.

In the year 1806 the late Dr. James Hoge, of Columbus, Ohio, was sent as a missionary to "*the State of Ohio and* PARTS ADJACENT."

As the new age, with its tumultuous and min-

gling elements and its pressing demands on Christian activity, hurried on, it developed difference of views and of policy where unanimity of both had prevailed before. In pushing forward the cause of evangelization there were two antagonistic theories according to which the work was conducted. One theory multiplied voluntary and irresponsible societies in different localities, and operated from various centers without unity of purpose or of government. The other theory strove to unify the benevolent work of the Church and to bring it within the metes and bounds of ecclesiastical control. In the slow but steady working out of this latter theory the committee on missions, which was raised by the General Assembly in 1790, became a stated committee, the stated committee became a standing committee, and the standing committee passed into the Board of Missions in the year 1816. In the same way successive efforts in behalf of ministerial education resulted at last in the Board of Education in the year 1819.

Besides these antagonistic views and policies in respect to the benevolent work of the Church, questions arose under the operation of the Plan of Union which touched the vital principles of Presbyterianism. There was no dispute as to what Presbyterianism was, but as to how far its fundamental principles might be ignored or suspended for the sake

of expediency. These questions and the differences which arose out of them became more and more emphasized each succeeding year. By some the Plan of Union was put above the constitution of the Church. By others the Plan of Union was regarded as a masterly device for congregationalizing the Church, or else for destroying both Presbyterianism and Congregationalism and producing a hybrid monstrosity of ecclesiasticism which would be a caricature of both. The differences were deep, striking down to the roots of the Presbyterian system, and were consequently irreconcilable.

In addition to the differences in regard to policy and polity, there were deeper doctrinal controversies. The cloud which contained this storm came from New England. New measures and New Haven theology created a great amount of distrust and disturbance throughout the Church. The very sincerity, earnestness and honesty of the men who were engaged on both sides of the controversy made the contest all the more determined and the excitement attending it all the more intense. Each succeeding year, with its discussions, conventions and trials for heresy, widened the lines of divergence and whetted the points of antagonism. With much of heroic devotion to principle as well as with much of mingled human infirmity and error on both sides, the contest waxed hotter

and hotter, until it reached its culmination in the exscinding acts of 1837 and the division of 1838.

Of late years it has become quite the style to speak in a tone of deprecating pity of these ecclesiastical battles of forty years ago, as though they were mere quibbles about words or disputes about the tithing of the mint and the anise and the cummin, and to quote them as proofs of a very low state of piety and of the prevalence of a rabid spirit of scholasticism and of dead orthodoxy; but it becomes us to beware lest we fall into the condemnation of those who, "measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." Deep and strong convictions of truth and of duty, and a firm adherence to these convictions at any cost, can never be a just cause of reproach to Christian men. For such convictions believers in all ages have been "tortured, not accepting deliverance," and have counted their blood as cheap as water when shed in such a cause. They "contend earnestly for the faith" because that faith is infinitely precious to them. A Church or a Christian without sharp and distinctive beliefs is a body without a spinal column, bones or marrow. If ever the time come when men shall not care to defend what they hold as Presbyterians or Methodists or Baptists or Congregationalists, the time will have come when men will not care to

defend the truth of the gospel at all. If to be a Presbyterian makes a man any the less a Christian in any sense or in any particular, then let us burn our Confession of Faith and our Book of Government, let us tear down and tear up the banner which was carried by our forefathers through so many persecutions. But if Presbyterianism is scriptural in theory and holy in its practical results, then let us never be afraid or ashamed to avow it. A Church without a creed is to one which has a creed as the hyssop on the wall is to the cedar of Lebanon or as the jellyfish is to the Nemean lion. The danger is not that we shall hold these doctrines too firmly or cherish them too sacredly, but that through remissness and indifference we shall let slip the precious trusts which have come down to us on rivers of martyr blood.

It is a significant and remarkable fact, and one which deserves especial emphasis at our hands, that those years of controversy and debate which preceded the division of 1837 were years of spiritual growth and prosperity in the Church, "the Holy Ghost this signifying," that the doctrines of the gospel are the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation even when preached in strife and debate. Better preached thus than not to be preached at all. We are not justified in passing judgment on these men of '37, some of whom linger amongst us,

who, 'firm in the right as God gave them to see the right," followed their convictions straight to the issue regardless of sacrifices or consequences.

The division of 1838 was followed by a period of tumult, litigation and readjustment. The plowshare ran through most of the synods and presbyteries, and through many of the churches even. Certain loose elements which were set afloat by these riving processes oscillated between the two bodies for some time, but at last attached to one or the other of them, or else drifted away to other spheres of ecclesiastical attraction and affinity. When the dust and smoke of the conflict were dispelled, the view revealed two Presbyterian churches with the same Confession of Faith and the same Form of Government and the same Book of Discipline, working side by side in the same field, yet having differences which were quite characteristic and distinctive.

The Old School Church was to a remarkable degree homogeneous in its constituent elements, and was distinguished for a rigid orthodoxy and a strict ecclesiasticism. The New School Church, on the other hand, was not homogeneous in its constituent elements, and was distinguished for a liberal construction of the standards, and for an ecclesiasticism which for the sake of the voluntary and cooperative system of beneficence put in jeopardy the

interests of a just and necessary denominationalism. The Old School Church continued in its orbit, in possession of its titles, dignities and endowments, while the New School Church, against its will, was flung off into a new and untried sphere. The Old School Church had a well-defined policy, and went right on in its course, with scarcely a jar or a jostle in its ecclesiastical operations. The New School party, stunned by the sudden and summary blow of excision, without a legal status and beyond the pale of its wonted ecclesiastical relations, was at first without a fixed policy; and through abounding magnanimity refusing to disentangle itself from incongruous alliances, was by these alliances seriously distracted and weakened. Its generosity, magnanimity and charity are beyond all praise, but unhappily these amiable and noble qualities outran the less dazzling and sterner attributes of wisdom, prudence and a just conservatism. The experiment of an amalgamated Presbyterianism, therefore, was made in propitious circumstances, under favorable conditions and by those whose sentiments and sympathies rendered the effort a sincere and cordial one; yet the experiment failed, and the failure has gone into history. There is nothing in this which is derogatory to the party which made the experiment, but it is, on the contrary, in the highest degree honorable to it that in the circumstances the

experiment was made; yet the failure is none the less significant and instructive.

The changes which were made in the constitution by the New School Church were soon discovered to be disastrous to the interests at stake and to the efficiency of ecclesiastical operations, and the mistake which had thus been made was speedily rectified by restoring the "Book" to its original form and by reinstating it as the constitutional law of the Church both in the letter and in the spirit of it. In the violent agitations and amidst the swift and turbulent currents which succeeded the division the Church had been swept somewhat from its moorings, but as soon as the storm had subsided it swung back to the safe harbor and the strong anchorage of constitutional Presbyterianism.

The theory of coöperation and of undenominationalism, in spite of the most unselfish and liberal efforts in its behalf, gradually broke down, and the pitiless logic of facts forced the Church to adopt a policy against which her charity and her sympathies reluctated, but which the solemn calls of duty and the urgent exigences of the times not only justified, but rendered imperative. She undertook to educate her own ministry, to create and disseminate her own literature and to conduct her missions in her own fields in her own way; and when to a well-defined task she set her hand, the work glowed be-

neath her touch. A new energy thrilled along every fiber of her organic life. Full of hope and zeal and enthusiasm, with a united and inflexible purpose, she entered upon a new era in her history which was as radiant with promise as the roseate sky mantling with the blushes of the morning. She had come at length to a clear conception of her mission. She saw her work distinctly and emphatically outlined in a field which suggested and invited boundless effort; and to that work she went with heart and mind and soul exulting in the free play of her untrammeled individuality.

The Old School, at the time of the division, had a wonderfully homogeneous constituency, a clearly-defined theology, a pure Presbyterian form of government, a fixed policy, an enthusiastic unanimity of sentiment, leaders of consummate ability, the prestige which accrued from its legally-recognized status, an ecclesiastical machinery ready to its hand, a definite work to do and an entire singleness of purpose in the prosecution of that work. The Board of Missions (domestic) and the Board of Education had already been organized and in operation for a score of years. In the stormy year of 1837, amidst the tumults of excision and division, the Board of Foreign Missions was organized, and into this board was at once merged the Western Foreign Missionary Society, which had been formed

and operated by the Synod of Pittsburg for six years previous to this date; and thus "the wall was built even in troublous times." Nor did this old church, even amidst the absorbing interest and excitement of such a crisis as that of 1837, forget for so much as an hour that "the field is the world." The Board of Foreign Missions, which was then constituted, has continued to this day to be a source of steadily-increasing power and blessing, and on its records are the names of as heroic men and women as ever planted the cross among savage men or amidst "the pestilence that walketh in darkness," and its martyrology is as glorious as that which was enacted in the Coliseum or in the imperial gardens of Nero.

With a full recognition of the power of the press and of the supreme importance of a sound theological literature, the Board of Publication was organized in the year 1838. Out of the work of Domestic Missions grew the Church Erection Fund of the New School Church and the Board of Church Extension of the Old School Church, both of which were merged at the reunion into the Board of Church Erection. Nor has the Church forgotten her worn-out veterans and their widows and orphans, and her efforts in their behalf resulted in the Board of Ministerial Relief. The benevolent agencies of the Church are not cunningly-devised

frameworks of abstract and finely-spun theories, but each one of them has arisen out of the actual necessities of the work and the urgent, emphatic demands of the times. They are a growth, a development, not an invention.

In both branches of the Church during the separation the subject of slavery produced earnest discussion and deep, widespread agitations. In the New School Church the deliverances on the subject by the General Assembly became more pronounced from year to year. The Northern portion of that Church became gradually but surely more emphatic in its anti-slavery convictions and utterances, while at the same time the Southern portion, through a variety of potent and subtle influences, was quietly slipping away from the testimonies of the Church against slavery and assuming the position that slaveholding was sanctioned by the Bible and was an institution not only to be tolerated but defended. Of necessity the breach between the parties became wider and wider each succeeding year. Their views were so divergent and so utterly irreconcilable that there was no hope or possibility of a compromise. The crisis came in the year 1857. The Southern Synod withdrew. The debates preceding the schism were candid and fraternal, and the parties separated without bitterness and with sincere mutual respect and love.

In the meantime, the political horizon grew black with angry and portentous clouds, and muttering thunders gathered to a storm in which not only churches went asunder, but in which States which were knit together by ties of brotherhood "were rent with civil feuds and drenched with fraternal blood." Amidst the trooping furies of an awful civil war the Old School Church was riven asunder, the split following the line which separated the loyal States from those which were in rebellion against the Federal government.

At this point a word is necessary in regard to the attitude and the teaching of the Church on the subject of slavery. The testimony of the Church on this matter has always been clear and explicit. In the year 1787 the Synod of New York and Philadelphia "highly approved of the general principles in favor of universal liberty that prevail in America, and the interest which many of the States had taken in promoting the abolition of slavery," and "recommended to all their people to use the most prudent measures, consistent with the interest and the state of civil society in the counties where they lived, to procure eventually the final abolition of slavery in America." This action was reaffirmed in 1793. In the year 1815 the General Assembly "declared their cordial approbation of those principles of civil liberty which appear to be recognized by the federal and

State governments in these United States," and urged the presbyteries under their care "to adopt such measures as will secure at least to the rising generation of slaves within the bounds of the Church a religious education, that they may be prepared for the exercise and enjoyment of liberty when God in his providence may open a door for their emancipation," and the same Assembly denounced "the buying and selling of slaves by way of traffic, and all undue severity in the management of them, as inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel."

The immortal paper upon the subject which was adopted by the General Assembly in the year 1818 begins with these ringing words: "We consider the voluntary enslaving of one portion of the human race by another as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, as utterly inconsistent with the law of God which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the gospel of Christ, which enjoins that 'all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;'" and the entire paper is in the tone and spirit of its initial sentence. The action of 1845 deals with the single and specific question as to whether slave-holding *per se* and "without regard to circumstances is a sin and a bar to Christian communion;" and that action did not

in any way or to any extent nullify or invalidate the former deliverances of the Church courts on the subject. The General Assembly of 1846 declared that in its judgment the action of the General Assembly of 1845 was not intended to deny or to rescind the testimony often uttered by the General Assembly previous to that date. Upon the deliverance of 1818 the Church as a body has always stood. To have abandoned that ground would at any time have rent the Church in twain.

Up to the time of the division the united Church occupied that ground. After the division in 1837, the utterances of the New School Church on the subject grew clearer and sharper every year. During the same time the Old School Church, while she was not aggressive on the subject, but for the sake of peace and charity was conservative, yet stood firmly by her past testimonies, so that even during the civil war and after the abolition of slavery she had not to change a sentence or a letter in her record, nor to adjust in the slightest her attitude so as to put herself in line and sympathy with the moral forces of the times. While the General Assembly thus held the ground of 1818, it must nevertheless be confessed that a rapid change of sentiment was going on in the Southern portion of the Church, until finally the bold position was assumed that slavery as an institution was right politically and

morally, and as such was to be defended and conserved, but the Church as a Church never held nor sanctioned such views. The spirit of both the Old and the New School Churches was to bear unequivocal testimony against the system of slavery as an institution, and yet at the same time to exercise the largest charity toward those who, through no fault of their own, were involved in the evils of that system. If, therefore, the Church committed an error, the error was on the side of charity; and if there were those who proved recreant to her testimonies and who abused the "charity that hopeth all things," the fault was theirs, not hers. Whatever may have been the errors of individual members or of portions of her communion, I am bold and proud to say that there is nothing in her records on the subject of slavery of which she need be ashamed or for which she need offer an apology.

Amidst the fearful throes of rebellion both Churches were in full sympathy with the government in its efforts to restore order and to preserve the integrity of the nation, making their voices heard and their influence felt in favor of supporting the "powers that be as ordained of God," and both Churches rejoiced and sang hallelujahs when, in the providence of God, slavery, the cause of the rebellion, was utterly overthrown and ground to powder. Neither, in their ardent loyalty to their coun-

try, did they forget their allegiance to their Lord, nor were they even in these perilous times derelict in carrying forward the standard of the cross.

In the suspense and danger and agony which attended the ravages of war, Christians of all denominations were drawn closer to each other. Great union associations, such as the Christian Commission, threw different Churches into contact and sympathy. This was specially the case with the Old and New School Presbyterian Churches. In the furnace of affliction their hearts were fused and mingled. They began to look each other in the face, to take each other by the hand, and in doing so they found that their hands were warmed by the same Presbyterian blood, and that their pulses beat to the same Christian hopes and purposes. They found that they had imperceptibly come together, that they were standing on common ground, that God had been leading them by a way which they knew not.

Each Church in its own sphere and in its own way had been working out important problems under the guidance of divine Providence. In its own sphere and according to the laws of its inner life the New School Church had freed itself from alien elements and entangling alliances, and had become a homogeneous Presbyterian body both in

doctrine and government. The Old School Church, straining her conservatism to the utmost tension, hoped and prayed that the dark and perplexing problem of slavery might be solved in peace and charity and without the stern arbitrament of the sword. But God willed otherwise. The fetters of the slave must be dissolved in blood. Standing bravely by her testimonies against slavery and bearing her witness against treason and rebellion, the Old School Church calmly awaited the decisive events of Providence; and when the schism of the Southern Church came, taking from out her pale the slavery issue, she felt herself relieved of a weight which had grievously beset her for years.

Thus God in his wise and mysterious providence had settled the issues between the two Churches. All that was left was for them to acknowledge and accept what God had done. The union of the two bodies was consummated on November 12, 1869, in the city of Pittsburg, Pa., and the two churches became organically one on the basis of the standards, pure and simple, and under the title of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, forming, as we trust, a true Church of Christ, whose uplifted banners shall become a rallying-point for all Presbyterians on the continent, where they may meet and settle all differences in a way which will be honorable to all parties, where the

scattered Presbyterian tribes may flow together as the tribes of old Israel poured to Zion, and shall become one, and shall be to all the world the best representative of a true unity which is not formed by external appliances, as though bound by hoops of steel, but a unity which is developed and strengthened by a conscious and intelligent oneness of intellectual belief and spiritual life—one not as a wired skeleton is one, but as a living man is one; a broad Church not in the sense of being latitudinarian, but broad in Christian sympathy and in the world-wide scope of Christian effort.

Since the reunion the progress of the Church has been steady, harmonious and rapid. With past alienations, feuds and bitternesses buried utterly out of sight and out of hearing, united, hopeful and "strong in the Lord," bound by indissoluble ties of brotherhood and fellowship to those of our own household of faith, and with ardent and ample charity for all others, we stand on the threshold of the new century, and with devout thanksgiving to God for the past and for the present we hail and welcome the great future.

Such is the past. Its perils, its toils, its journeyings, its disasters, its achievements, its conflicts, its discouragements, its declensions, its revivals, its mighty sermons, its high debates, its struggles, its

privations, its sacrifices, its rewards, its failures, its successes, its hopes, its disappointments, its divisions, its reunions, its unheralded and unrequited labors,—have all gone into their place, and have performed their part in fulfilling the purpose of God toward this land and the world. They form a picture of surpassing interest—a picture strong in blended light and shadow, but having withal much more of light than of shadow. We have good reason to be proud of our Presbyterian ancestry, for what they were, for what they achieved and for what they represented. We have a glorious heraldry, but we must not rest in these.

The great Roman satirist lashes with whips of scorpions the degenerate sons of the Curii and the Lepidi, who with dice and wine and soft voluptuousness melted away their dissolute lives in the statued halls of illustrious ancestors, where every tablet groaned with a wealth of genealogical lore and every wreath and chaplet was redolent with glorious memories. Let us be careful that we incur not such satire. We have been sitting beneath our genealogical tree and rejoicing in its staunch branches and in its capacious shade. We have been gathering up the articulate lessons and the solemn, inspiring voices of the century that is gone. Let these lessons and voices only quicken us to read aright the signs of the times, and to hear and to

interpret rightly the voice of God as it comes to us in his word and his providence, that through watching and prayer, through faithfulness and self-sacrifice, the present may not be a lie and a slander on the past, but that it may be a consistent opening and preparation for a brighter and grander future.

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